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FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

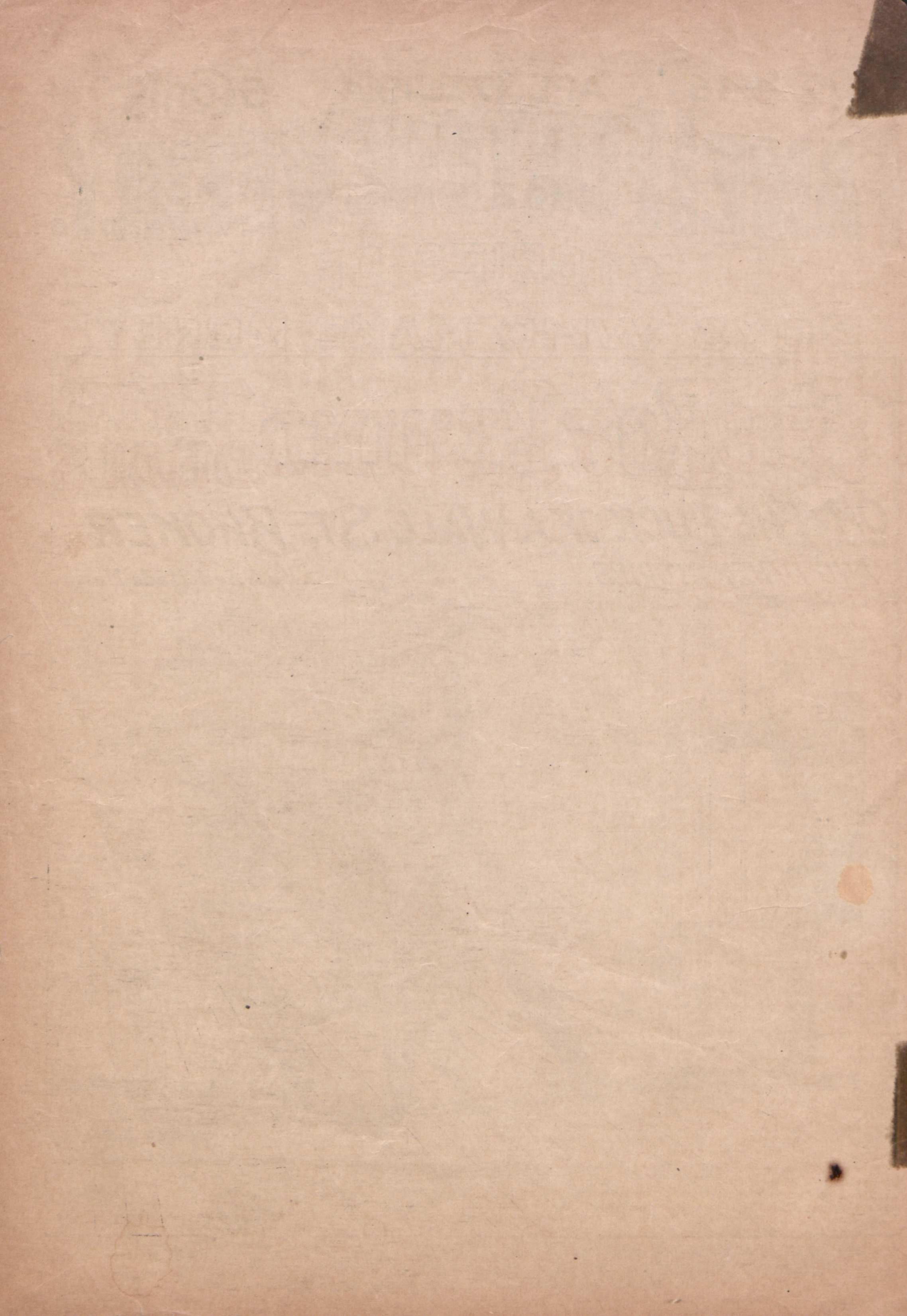
THE BOY BEHIND THE DEALS OR THE LUCK OF A WALL ST. BROKER

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



Joe made a rush for the two thieves and seized the satchel. As he endeavored to tear it from the man's grasp, the other fellow raised his umbrella and struck the boy over the head. Just then Mr. Martin appeared in the doorway.



Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, APRIL 17, 1914.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BOY BEHIND THE DEALS

—OR—

THE LUCK OF A WALL STREET BROKER

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERIOUS BURGLARY.

"Joe!" roared Broker Preston, glaring savagely at his office boy, "where have you been for the last hour?"

"I haven't been out an hour, sir," replied the boy.

"Don't contradict me. I say you have. I sent you with an important message to Mr. Bulfinch. You were to bring me back an answer. Where is it?"

"Here it is, sir."

The broker snatched the envelope, tore it open and read it. The contents did not appear to give him much satisfaction.

"The infernal old hyena——"

He stopped and looked at the boy.

"What are you doing there? What are you waiting for?" he snarled.

"I thought maybe you——"

"Get out!" cried the broker.

Joe started for the door of the private-room.

"Stop!" shouted his boss. "I've got another message for you. If you lose time over this one I'll fire you, neck and crop. Understand?"

"Yes, sir."

The broker pulled out his watch.

"I'm going to time you. It's two o'clock. If you aren't back by half-past, look out for squalls."

Joe took the note and hurried out.

"Gee, but he's cranky to-day," said the boy, putting on his hat and leaving the office. "He lost money, I'll bet, on this morning's slump in the market. You can always tell when things have gone wrong with him. This afternoon he's worse than usual, so he must have lost a bunch of money."

Two minutes later Joe Cook was on the street, hurrying along toward his destination, which was a broker's office in the Mills Building.

"Hello, Joe, what's your rush?" said a messenger, named Sam Wells, grabbing him by the arm.

"Let go, I'm in a hurry," said Joe.

"Hello, Joe, you're just the chap I wanted to see," chimed in another messenger, named Bob Bruce.

"I say, don't stop me. I'm on a rush message."

"You're going in the wrong direction," said Sam, pulling him to the left.

"He's going over to the Exchange," said Bob, pulling him to the right.

"Cut this tomfool business out, you fellows. I'm bound for the Mills Building, and I've got to be back at the office in half an hour."

Sam and Bob winked at each other, put out one of their legs and tripped Joe up.

Then they hurried away, laughing at the trick.

Joe went sprawling on his back, and his envelope flew into the gutter.

"Confound those funny guys," cried the boy, scrambling up. "Now, where's my envelope?"

An Italian had just wheeled up his cart of bananas, and the dago placed the stick that held the cart steady on the envelope.

"Here, I say, move that cart of yours," said Joe.

"What-a mat?" said the fruit vendor.

"Take that stick out of the way, will you?"

"What-a do dat for?"

"It's standing on my envelope. Hurry up."

The Italian didn't understand.

He thought Joe was up to some lark.

"No move-a," he said.

"I'll bet you will," said Joe, making a dive under the handles.

As he lifted the stick and grabbed his note, the Italian grabbed him and pulled him away.

The consequence was the cart tilted and dumped the bananas into the street.

The dago uttered a shout of rage and began to pound the messenger boy.

Joe punched him in the stomach, got on his feet and rushed away.

The Italian shouted "Police!" and some excitement took place at that spot.

The cause of the trouble was out of sight among the crowd, and he soon reached the broker's office and delivered his note.

He got an answer, and hurried back with it.

Preston was engaged with a visitor, but Joe knocked and walked in.

He handed over the note and got out.

The cashier had a note for him to take across the street, and when he got back it was time for him to carry the day's deposits to the bank.

He got back in due time, and turned in the bank book to the cashier.

In a little while the buzzer called him into the private room again.

"I want you to take that package to my house," said his boss.

"All right, sir. Shall I go now?"

"After you take this note to Hanover street you can start uptown."

"Any answer, sir?"

"No."

"Then I can save time by taking the package with me."

"No, you won't. You'll come back and get the package. I won't be here, but you'll find it right there on the safe."

Joe thought it a waste of time for him to have to return for the package, as he intended to take a Third avenue train at the Hanover Square station, but he had to follow orders.

He carried the message to the office in Hanover street, and left it with the chief clerk.

On his way back he encountered his friend, Sam Wells.

"You and Bob nearly got me into a bunch of trouble by tripping me up on Broad street," said Joe. "You chaps are altogether too gay sometimes."

"How was that?" grinned Sam.

Joe told him about the run-in he had had with the Italian fruit peddler.

"Those dagos are as thick as molasses," he said. "I couldn't make him understand that my envelope was under his old stick. He wouldn't move it, so I had to do it myself. Before I could put the stick back in position he jumped on me, and down went his cart, dumping his stock in trade into the street, which served him right. If I hadn't been spry I might have been arrested."

"Sorry, old man, but we didn't intend to get you in trouble," said Sam.

"I suppose not, but you don't want to try that on again."

"About time you were off, isn't it?"

"Yes; but I've got to carry a package to the boss' house."

"Where does he live?"

"On Madison avenue."

"And you live over in Jersey City?"

"I sure do. I'd sooner live over there in a whole house than in a flat in New York."

"Rents are cheap in Jersey, I s'pose?"

"Not particularly."

"What sort of a house do you live in?"

"A seven-room cottage."

"What does your mother pay for it?"

"She owns it, barring a small mortgage."

"Your father is dead?"

"Yes. He died three years ago."

"And you have three sisters?"

"Yes. One goes to school, and the other two work in a department store in Jersey City."

"How long have you been working for Preston?"

"Something over two years."

"I've heard he is a crank."

"He is when he's out of humor. He's been that way all the afternoon."

"I don't envy you. My boss is always good-natured. That's the kind of employer to have."

"You're lucky; but I've got to get back and take that package uptown. I want to get home by five if I can."

The boys parted, and Joe returned to his office and took the package off the safe.

He stopped at the cashier's window and told that gentleman to tell Preston if he came in that he had taken the package which was to go to his house.

Then he walked down to the Hanover Square station and boarded a train.

A sporty-looking chap got in at Fulton street and sat down near him.

Joe let the package rest on his lap while he read the afternoon paper.

The paper contained some sensational news relating to a robbery which had been pulled off that day at a house on a side street off Fifth avenue.

It was the residence of a large private banker in the financial district.

The silver plate and the jewels of the banker's wife were kept in a large wall safe of an up-to-date pattern.

The door of the safe had been discovered open by the lady on her return home to lunch, and all her jewels missing.

The plate, which was quite valuable, had not been touched, nor had anything else been taken from the house.

The safe door had not been drilled and blown open, but had been opened on the combination, which was supposed to be known only to the banker and his wife.

It was not a simple combination, and the detectives called in on the case did not see how the thief or thieves had hit upon it.

All the servants, three of them, were in the house when the burglary was committed, and they had heard nothing suspicious, nor seen any man leave the place.

The banker had a step-son who lived with him, but he was downtown at the bank, as usual.

So the robbery was involved in mystery, and the only clew the detectives had to go on was a number of small burglar's tools which they found on the floor.

These had not been used, and were not particularly adapted to safe breaking.

Such were the facts printed by the paper, and Joe had reached the end of the story when the train pulled in at a station.

The sporty young man got up, grabbed the package off the boy's lap, and shot out through the door.

CHAPTER II.

JOE PICKS UP A WALLET AND FINDS A TIP.

Joe felt the package leave his person, and looked to see if it had slipped off on the floor.

Finding it had not, he sprang up and looked out of the door.

He saw it in the hands of the sporty fellow, who was going through the exit gate.

At that moment the guard slammed the gate and pulled the signal cord.

"Let me off. I've been robbed!" cried the young messenger, laying his hand on the gate.

"You're too late," said the guard.

"I guess not," cried Joe, grabbing the handle.

The guard pulled him back, and the train started.

Joe gave the man a shove, opened the gate and jumped out on the platform.

The impulse of the train caused him to lose his balance, and he fell on his back.

He was up in a moment and dashing for the exit gate, which the ticket-chopper was closing.

Joe caught the edge of the iron gate, shoved it open and flew down the stairs.

When he reached the bottom he saw the thief some little way ahead walking fast down the side street.

The boy started after him.

The rascal looked back and, recognizing Joe, started ahead on a run.

He was no match for the messenger in speed, and realizing that he would be overtaken before he could reach the corner, he darted into the street, flung the package into a light express wagon that was proceeding at a fast clip, and sprang in after it.

Joe put on speed and came up with the back of the wagon.

"Hand out that package, you crook!" he cried to the thief.

"Take your hands off there or I'll step on them," replied the rascal.

"Grab him, driver," cried Joe, as the man on the seat looked around.

He uttered the words more as a bluff than anything else to distract the thief's attention.

The crook turned his head to see if the driver was going to interfere.

Joe took immediate advantage of the chance to clamber into the wagon.

The rascal kicked out at the boy, just missing his head.

The messenger seized his leg and tripped him up.

Before he could recover, Joe was astride of his chest.

"Hey, you fellows, get out of this wagon," cried the driver, reining in.

"This chap is a thief," said Joe.

The driver stopped and again ordered them out.

Seeing he could expect no help, the boy jumped off the rascal, seized his package and sprang to the ground.

The crook made no effort to follow him.

He had got the worst of the run-in, and knowing he had no right to the stolen bundle, he got out and walked away in the opposite direction.

Joe walked the rest of the way to the boss' house.

He left the package with the maid who opened the door, and came away.

On his way downtown on the train he devoted his attention to the financial page of his paper.

There was considerable in it about the slump which had upset the stock market that day.

It was very interesting to him, for he speculated a little himself.

He had started doing so with \$50, and now he had \$600, represented by a certificate of deposit in the little bank on Nassau street, in the brokerage department of which he had put his deals through.

He had made \$300 of that sum out of the very stock which had slumped that day by taking time by the forelock and selling out before the market turned.

He considered himself as one of the lucky messengers of the Street, and, as a matter of fact, he was.

Sam Wells speculated, and so did Bob Bruce, and many others, but none of them could boast of any great success.

Usually they hung on the last dollar and got left in the shuffle.

But it was luck more than anything else that stood for Joe.

At South Ferry Joe changed to the Ninth avenue road and rode as far as the Cortlandt street station, where he got off and walked to the ferry.

He took a cross seat in the men's cabin near a well-dressed, pompous-looking gentleman.

After the boat started, an acquaintance of the gentleman's came along and sat down in the vacant space between Joe and the pompous man.

As the boy was figuring on the prospect offered by the slump for him to get in on another deal, he paid no attention to them.

Before the boat reached the other side they got up and went forward.

Joe was about to do the same when he saw a red leather wallet lying on the seat where the men had been seated.

He picked it up, and satisfied that one of the gentlemen had dropped it, he went forward to find them.

The gentlemen had forged their way to the front line close to the iron collapsible guard, and behind them was banked a solid bunch of other people eager to rush ashore.

The attempt of Joe to elbow his way ahead was resented.

"Who are you shoving?" said one party.

"Stand back, young fellow, and take your time," said another.

"I'm looking for a couple of gentlemen who are somewhere in this crowd," explained the boy.

"Get up where the pilot-house is, and maybe you can see them," suggested a third man, facetiously.

"But I don't want to lose them," protested Joe.

His immediate neighbors laughed at this as though they thought it a good joke.

At that moment the boat, being under a little too much headway, hit the dock a heavy blow, and the crowd fell back.

Joe lost his balance and went down, and a stout man losing his, too, sat upon him.

The boat was tied up and the crowd surged ashore.

The stout man had knocked some of the boy's wind out, but was profuse in his apologies.

Joe got ashore among the last of those who were not in a hurry, but he could not see the two gentlemen he was after.

They had gone into the station, for they commuted on one of the lines running out of Jersey City, and that fact didn't occur to him.

He looked to find them among those walking up the street, and, naturally, he failed to see them.

Finally he had to give the quest up, and boarded a street car for his home, as he lived near the suburbs.

Taking his seat, he opened the wallet and examined it.

It contained a \$10 bill, some memoranda and several postage stamps.

There was also a blank card.

On the back of this was some writing.

Joe read it as follows:

"Get in on A. & D. It is good for a fat rise. You can bank on it as a good thing, for the Daly Syndicate is behind it, and that means a boom in the immediate future. I have loaded up myself and expect to clear fifty thousand. Kindly keep this mum and destroy the card. Yours fraternally,

"J. C. B."

Joe read the foregoing over twice.

The date was the day previous.

He saw he had got hold of what bore the earmarks of a first-class tip.

"Here's luck," he thought. "I ought to double my \$600 by following this. A pointer like this one is as rare as hen's teeth. I'm a fortunate bird. If the boss hadn't sent me up to his house I would have missed this snap. It's better to be born lucky than rich."

A closer examination of the wallet turned up the business card of a lawyer with some court memoranda on the back.

"I wonder if he's the owner of the wallet?" thought Joe. "It's easy enough to find out, for his office is at 150 Broadway. I'll call there if I get the chance to-morrow."

He put the wallet in his pocket and gave his attention to the sporting page of his newspaper.

In twenty minutes the car reached the corner where he got off, and ten minutes later he walked into the house.

"Hello, sis, where's mother?" he asked his youngest sister.

"She went over to see Mrs. Carter. She ought to be back soon."

"And you're making a bluff to cook supper, eh?"

"The idea! As if this was the first time I attended to the cooking."

"What have you got in the oven?"

"Never mind. You mustn't be so inquisitive."

"It's a quarter to six, and I'm hungry."

"We don't have supper till half-past six."

That was the time when Maud and Nellie Cook got home from work.

"Well, let's see what you've got in the oven," said Joe. "It smells good."

"No, you sha'n't see."

Joe seized his sister, and while she was struggling with him their mother came in.

"How's Mrs. Carter, mother?" said Joe, releasing his sister.

"She's well, but in trouble."

"About what?"

"You know her husband left her some railroad stock, on which she's been drawing small dividends?"

"Yes."

"Well, having the need to raise some money to pay the expenses of renewing her mortgage, settling the interest due, and the house painter's bill, she decided to sell the stock and put the rest of the money in bank."

"Yes," nodded Joe.

"The gentleman who holds the mortgage on her house is a New York broker, so she asked him if he would sell her shares. He said he would if it was good stock. She showed him the certificate for fifteen shares. He said it was worth about \$98 a share, and he could easily dispose of it. He further said he wouldn't charge her any commission. He took the certificate away, with her order to sell it. Next evening he called and told her that as she only needed about \$200 cash, she would make a good thing by trading her fifteen shares for 400 shares of Little Giant mining stock, at \$3 a share, and \$300 cash. He assured her that the mining stock was sure to pay her a larger dividend than she could expect to get from a savings bank if she sold her railroad shares outright and banked the money."

"Did she make the deal?"

"She did, and now she's worried about it."

"Why? Isn't the mining stock worth what the broker said it was? A reputable trader wouldn't skin her. If she is sorry she took the new stock, why, she can tell the broker to sell it for her and get out. Who is the broker?"

"Uriah Bolton."

Joe whistled.

He knew Broker Bolton by reputation, and by sight as well. He was considered one of the slickest and foxiest traders in Wall Street.

No one trusted him any further than he could see him.

He was a member of the Curb Exchange.

And more than once had been in trouble with the managers for acts not considered the proper thing in a trader.

The charges had never been proved, and so he escaped being dropped from the membership-roll.

Nevertheless, he was in bad odor with the "boys."

If Mrs. Carter had put her deal through Mr. Bolton's hands, it was possible she might have cause to regret it.

Still she could fall back on the management of the Curb Exchange for justice, and if it was found he had taken advantage of her, he would be forced to make good.

"So Mr. Bolton is the broker who holds her mortgage?" said Joe.

"Yes."

"And he suggested that she exchange her railroad shares for mining shares, together with a small cash payment?"

"That's what she told me."

"Well, the deal may be all right, for it's only a small one as far as Mr. Bolton is concerned, but he isn't a man I would do business with."

"Do you know anything about him?"

"I've heard a whole lot about his business methods, and I can't say that I fancy them. He hasn't a good reputation in Wall Street."

"Dear me. Do you think he would take advantage of a widow like Mrs. Carter?"

"I don't know; but I've heard he has squeezed a good many people."

"Do you know anything about the value of that Little Giant mining stock?"

"No. I can easily find out."

"Do so, for a gentleman who called on Mrs. Carter last night told her that while the stock is quoted at \$3, she wouldn't be able to get that price if she tried to sell it. And as to the min-

ing company paying a regular dividend, as Mr. Bolton told her it would, he didn't believe it."

Joe promised to look into the matter, and his two sisters coming in from their work, the family presently sat down to supper.

CHAPTER III.

LITTLE GIANT MINING STOCK.

Joe showed the red wallet he picked up on the boat, and said he had a line on the owner, he guessed.

He said nothing about the stock tip, for he kept his speculative affairs to himself, and his mother and sisters had no idea he was worth \$600.

Next morning, true to his promise, he looked up the Little Giant matter.

He found that the stock was quoted on the Western markets at \$3, which showed that Broker Bolton had not charged the Widow Carter any more than the current price in making the deal for her.

Later, Joe spoke to a young Curb broker about the mine.

"What's the chances of the company paying a dividend?" he said.

"About as much chance as you have of voting at the next election," replied the broker.

"That's a mighty small chance."

"I guess so. Are you acquainted with somebody who owns stock in that mine?"

"I am. The party recently exchanged 15 shares of good railroad stock at 98 for 400 shares of Little Giant and \$300 cash."

The broker made a rapid mental calculation, and found that the person in question had paid practically \$3 a share for the mining stock.

"I'm afraid this friend of yours was badly taken in," he said.

"Why, the stock is quoted at \$3," said Joe.

"I know it is, but it isn't worth \$1."

"It isn't? How do you make that out?"

"Until the last two weeks Little Giant never sold higher than 80 cents. Owing to some juggling business, put through for a purpose, the price has been forced up to \$3, probably by wash sales. I doubt if any stock has actually changed hands above \$1. If I offered 100 shares on the Curb now, I doubt if any trader would bid as high as a dollar for it. Who induced your friend to pay \$3 for it? He ought to be kicked."

"Uriah Bolton."

"He ought to be prosecuted, the old villain. You might expect something like that from him."

"I'll tell the lady to call on him at once and make him take the stock back, or threaten to take the case before the Exchange."

"The Exchange couldn't do a thing as long as he can show that he charged no more than the market price."

"But if that's a fake price?"

"It's the official market price, no matter how the figure was engineered, and stands for the present apparent value of the stock. A story was published awhile ago that a rich find was made in the mine, but as the report lacks confirmation, it is not believed. Some Western operators used the story as a lever for boosting the price—that's the opinion here. It will probably drop to its proper level in a few days."

"Then you think the lady is stuck?"

"I certainly do."

"What would you advise her to do?"

"Tell her what I have told you, and suggest that she call on Mr. Bolton and ask him to give her some good mining stock, like Jumbo, in place of the Little Giant."

"And suppose he refuses to square the transaction?"

The young broker shrugged his shoulders.

As there was no use pressing the matter further, Joe said good-by and went on his way.

Privately he did not believe that Mr. Bolton would do anything for the widow Carter.

He had taken a mean advantage of her, and his nature would induce him to stick to it.

About noon he found the chance to go to the little bank, and bought 60 shares of A. & D. at 85 on margin, putting up his certificate of deposit.

When he went to the bank with the day's deposits he got permission of the cashier to call on the lawyer, whose name was Jackson, and who he believed owned the red wallet.

The gentleman was in his office and received him in his private room.

Joe told him he had found a wallet on the ferryboat that afternoon previous with his business card in it, and asked him if he had lost such an article.

"I did indeed, but I don't remember where it got away from me," replied the legal gentleman.

He described the wallet and what was in it, and Joe passed it to him.

"I am much obliged to you, young man, for bringing it to me. Permit me to give you the \$10 that was in it as a reward for your trouble."

Joe accepted the money and took his leave.

He was glad that the lawyer had not questioned him about the stock tip.

Doubtless the pointer did not recur to his mind at the time.

When he went home he told his mother what he had learned about the Little Giant mine, and she told him to go over and see Mrs. Carter after supper.

This he did, and the widow received him in her little parlor.

"I'm glad to see you, Joe," she said. "Your mother was over to see me yesterday afternoon."

"Yes, and you were speaking to her about a stock deal you made with Broker Uriah Bolton, and which you told her you felt a bit disturbed over."

The widow nodded.

"Mother asked me to look into the matter in a general way and find out, if I could, whether the Little Giant mining shares, which you accepted in exchange, with \$300 cash, for your railroad stock, was really worth the price you were charged for them."

"I am much obliged to you, Joe, for interesting yourself in the matter."

"Don't mention it, Mrs. Carter. I am pleased to be of service to you. Well, I found an opportunity to-day to make some inquiries of a mining broker who ought to know what he talks about, and he let a little light in on the subject. First, I will say that his opinion of Uriah Bolton is not very exalted, and that opinion seems to be shared by others who have had business dealings with the broker. In fact, I have heard enough about Mr. Bolton myself for some time back to make me distrust his methods. Still, you know, what one hears about a person is not always true, but, nevertheless, it gives you a shaky opinion of that person, which is too bad if he or she doesn't deserve what is said about them."

"Isn't Mr. Bolton an honest man?" said the widow, anxiously.

"I'd rather not pass any opinion on him, Mrs. Carter. I'm only a boy, and my opinion may not be worth anything. All I can say is that the reputation he bears in Wall Street is not what I'd like to have if I were a broker."

"Then it can't be a good one."

"He is foxy and inclined to take advantage of people he does business with. I believe he plays no favorites in this respect. He will try and work a trader, presumed to be up to snuff, as quick as he will a lamb or easy mark. That's the way he does business. Traders don't like to be worked any more than outsiders, and that's why he is disliked by the Street."

Joe then told the widow what the Curb broker said to him about the present market price of Little Giant, and how it had been forced up from about 80 cents, which the trade seemed to regard as its true value, to \$3.

"The price of stocks, ma'am, is often inflated above their actual value, and it is just as often beaten down. There is always a reason for this—the object being to make money out of a rise or a fall," went on Joe. "Of course, it takes a lot of money, and sharp inside manipulation, to do these things, as a rule, and one man can hardly work the game. A number of rich people, usually millionaires, get together, form a syndicate and combine a proportion of their resources. In this way a large working capital is brought to bear upon the deal, and it goes through successfully provided a snag is not encountered. Many syndicates have gone to pieces at the moment of success, and the members of it have lost heavily in place of winning, owing to a miscalculation of the situation, or for other causes they were unable to handle at the critical moment. But I am getting away from the subject that interests you."

"I am interested in all you say, Joe," said the widow.

"In the case of the Little Giant, some interested parties out West have managed to shove the price up to \$3, though I guess most brokers take little stock in that figure as the market price. Mr. Bolton, however, may have seen the chance to work the 400 shares off on you at the inflated value. I am sure he couldn't have sold the stock to any New York trader at anything like the figure. The broker I spoke to said he wouldn't pay \$1 a share for it. That is pretty good evidence, in my opinion, that if you tried to sell it on the Curb you

would not get more than a third of what Mr. Bolton charged you for it. You'd probably lose about \$800."

"My gracious!" cried the widow. "Why, that is robbery."

"That is about what it is, but you couldn't accuse Mr. Bolton of robbing you."

"Why not, if he charged me \$3 a share for stock that is not worth over \$1?"

"Because he could take refuge behind the fact that when he sold you the stock the market value was \$3, and he could prove it."

"If the market value of a stock is not to be relied on, how can a purchaser tell what he is buying?"

"The market price is usually bona fide evidence of the selling price of a stock, but it does not follow that it represents the true value of the stock, which may be intrinsically worth more or less than the trading figure at a given time. I have just explained to you how in the case of the Little Giant the price has been forced up out of reason through wash or fake sales between brokers. This could hardly be worked with a stock that was regularly dealt in. The brokers would not stand for it if they could help it. I judge that Little Giant is not in much demand even on the Western exchanges where mining shares are principally dealt in. That would give manipulators a chance to use it as a shuttlecock, since the rest of the brokers, having no orders to buy it, wouldn't care how it went."

"What would you advise me to do? Call on Mr. Bolton and demand an explanation of him?"

"Call on him and tell him what you have learned. Tell him that you think he has treated you shamefully, and request him to take the stock back, and in place of it give you the money you are entitled to through the sale of your 15 shares of Southern Railway at 98, less the \$300 you have already been paid."

"Suppose he refuses to do this?"

"Call at my office and see me, and perhaps I can find a way to help you."

"I will do as you suggest, and I thank you very much for your advice."

"You are welcome. Don't lose any time. It will be to your interest to see Mr. Bolton while Little Giant is still quoted out West at \$3. That price will not hold very long in my opinion. It might drop to \$1 or less to-morrow. If it does that before you call on Bolton, he will probably make no concession."

Joe got up, wished Mrs. Carter luck, and bade her good-night.

Privately he feared she was going to have trouble with Uriah Bolton.

CHAPTER IV.

DEALING CHIEFLY WITH URIAH BOLTON.

Joe had read what was printed in that morning's papers about the robbery of the banker's home, and found there was little additional facts about it.

Ordinarily he would not have given it much thought, for things more or less on a par with it were happening almost every day in New York, and one could hardly keep track of any particular case unless it was more than ordinarily important and the newspapers kept the subject alive.

In this instance Joe was attracted by the mystery which surrounded the opening of the safe on the combination.

He could not see how a burglar was able to figure out the right combination within the short time in which he had pulled off the job.

To do that with any degree of success the boy reasoned that he must be an expert safe man, and one who had had a lot of experience with that particular brand of safe.

Either that or he had found a paper with the combination marked down on it where it was kept by the banker or his wife for reference.

The detective on the case had given out no theory, and the newspapers had not suggested any.

That afternoon's papers had very little to say about the robbery, the reporters on the assignment having exhausted all sources of news.

Joe doubted if there would be anything about it next morning unless the detectives made a showing.

He talked the matter over with his mother and sisters, and then went to bed.

When Joe returned from an errand next morning he found the Widow Carter in the reception-room.

"Good-morning, Mrs. Carter," he said, politely. "Have you seen Mr. Bolton?"

"I have. He expressed great indignation that I should believe him guilty of having taken an unfair advantage of me. He denounced my advisers as busybodies who found pleasure in making trouble. He showed me a Goldfield market report of yesterday in which Little Giant was quoted at \$3.05, and he said he and every broker did business on the strength of market reports. He informed me that it wasn't always what a stock might be really worth, but the figure it was quoted at in the exchanges which established the basis for deals. He admitted that the Little Giant had been selling below \$1 for some time, but pointed out that the sudden rise was due to the published rumor that a rich vein of ore had been discovered in the mine. He showed me several printed clippings pasted in a scrap book about the said discovery. He insisted that the story must be true or it would not have been given public notice. At any rate he said he believed the report was true, and he would not be surprised to see the price go higher."

"What did you say to all that?" asked Joe.

"I said that he would greatly oblige me by taking the stock back and giving me the money instead."

"How did he take that?"

"He said he couldn't do that, as the deal had been put through on his books. If I didn't want to keep the stock I could fetch it to his office and he would sell it for me at the best price he could get, and would charge me nothing for the trouble."

"That was the only thing he would do?"

"Yes."

"Wait a moment. I will speak to my boss about it."

Joe walked into the private room and asked Mr. Preston if he could speak to him on a subject of some importance.

"What is it?" asked the broker, a bit sharply, for he was still in a negative humor.

Joe laid the widow's case before him.

"Huh! The lady has been swindled. That's all there is to it," he said.

"What would you advise her to do?"

"I have no advice to offer. I never meddle with what does not concern me."

"But she is a friend of mine."

"I can't help that. I don't know her. Besides, I have no right to butt in between her and her broker."

"But if Mr. Bolton has swindled her—"

"What is that to me? If he swindled me, I'd sue him."

"Would it pay her to bring suit against him in this case?"

"I don't know anything about it. I'm not a lawyer."

"Do you think she had better consult one?"

"That is for the lady to decide. Don't bother me any more, I'm busy."

Joe left the room much disappointed.

He told Mrs. Carter that his employer would not commit himself on the subject, and the only thing he could say was that if he was in her place he'd call on one of the head men of the Curb Exchange and put her case before him.

"Where will I find the right person?" said the widow.

Joe didn't know, and consulted the cashier.

That person wrote the name of a leading Curb brokerage firm on a slip of paper, and said the lady would find out there.

Joe gave the widow the paper, and she went away.

Later in the day the boy saw the trader he had consulted the previous day, and told him about the result of Mrs. Carter's visit to Uriah Bolton.

"It's about what I would expect," he said. "I'm afraid the lady will get little satisfaction. Bolton will use the market price as his defence, and though the transaction has a shady look, I don't see that he can be held responsible in any way. Everybody knows Uriah Bolton's tactics, and we all fight clear of him. It would be actionable, however, to publicly call him a swindler. He'd sue you for damages, and he'd be likely to get a verdict. Law is law, and a rascal can use it for his benefit as well as an honest man."

"Would it pay the lady to sue Bolton on the ground that he took unfair advantage of her in this deal?"

"I don't think it would. At any rate, I wouldn't advise her to do it unless she could carry the case to the highest court. It would probably be two years before a final decision was reached, and even then the lady might lose. In any event the costs of such a suit, including the services of a lawyer, would eat up the sum involved."

"Then you think Mrs. Carter has little show of getting square?"

"I wouldn't like to insure her chance."

"Uriah Bolton ought to be run out of the Street."

"There are others. A person doing business in Wall Street

THE BOY BEHIND THE DEALS.

should select a reputable brokerage firm. There are plenty of them."

When Joe went home that night the report he made to his mother concerning Mrs. Carter's deal was not encouraging.

"I feel sorry for her," said Mrs. Cook. "She can't afford to lose so much money. It might ultimately result in her losing her home."

"Maybe Mr. Bolton had that object in view, as he holds the mortgage. By crippling her financially he might be laying his plans for the future."

"Then all I can say is he's a mighty mean kind of a man."

"That's nothing unusual. Half the world is always looking for a chance to rob the other half. I'll bet Bolton lies awake nights figuring out how he can beat his customers in a legal way."

"In a legal way!"

"Yes. That's the only safe way if you want to keep out of court."

"I never thought a person could be legally imposed upon."

"Didn't you, mother? Then you have another think coming. It's done every day, but you've got to be smarter than the other fellow. In Mrs. Carter's case Bolton has swindled her in a legal way. He holds a full hand."

Joe sympathized deeply with the Widow Carter, and though he saw no way of helping her out, he felt very sore on Broker Bolton.

"I'd like to tell him what I thought of him," he said to himself. "I'll bet it would make his hair curl."

But the boy realized that he couldn't tell the broker what he thought of him without getting in trouble, and he wasn't looking for complications.

Next day he told his friend Sam Wells about the Carter case, and Sam said he wouldn't be surprised at anything Bolton did.

"He's a skin from the ground floor up," he said.

"But it can't be proved," said Joe.

"I don't care whether it can or not. I wouldn't trust him with a nickel and expect to get it back."

"It's a wonder he can do business with the reputation he has."

"That's because everybody doesn't know him. There are new lambs coming into Wall Street every day, and he hooks two or three of them, squeezes them dry of their little roll, then shakes them by the hand and tells them how sorry he is they did not come out ahead. Oh, he's a lulu. I'll bet that most of the people he has robbed, in one way or another, don't even suspect him of doing them. A Wall Street lamb is the easier animal to separate from its bank account known. I have heard brokers say that it is almost a shame to take their money, for they haven't more than one chance in ten of winning."

"They ought to stay away from the Street."

"If they did there would be a sign of 'To Let' on most of the brokers' offices, and we'd have to hunt for another job."

"Then we can't afford to sympathize with them."

"I should say not. Charity begins at home. If all the fools dropped dead at once a lot of people with fat bank accounts would soon be living on snowballs, and there wouldn't be enough of them to go around even in winter."

Joe laughed and the boys went their separate ways.

CHAPTER V.

JOE VISITS BUNKVILLE.

Around half-past twelve next day, Cashier Martin called Joe to his desk.

"I want you to take this satchel to the Sub-treasury and get \$5,000 in gold. In this package there is \$5,000 in bills, which you will turn over for the coin."

"All right, sir," said the boy.

The cashier dropped the package of money into the satchel, locked it and handed the key to Joe.

At that time there were two visitors in the outer office.

They were strangers to the establishment, and were standing within earshot of the cashier's window.

Naturally, they heard what passed between Mr. Martin and the boy.

As Joe picked up the satchel they suddenly started for the door and walked out into the corridor.

Joe got his hat and followed.

The two visitors went no further than the door, and after a brief exchange of words they took up their positions on either side of it.

At that moment the corridor was deserted save by them.

As Joe opened the door and came out, the men pounced upon him.

While one held the boy, the other tore the satchel from his grasp.

Then striking the boy down they started for the stairs.

They thought they had knocked the lad out for the time being.

They were mistaken, for he was up in a twinkling.

Joe made a rush for the two thieves and seized the satchel.

As he endeavored to tear it from the man's grasp, the other fellow raised his umbrella and struck the boy over the head.

Just then Mr. Martin appeared at the doorway.

He took in the situation at a glance and rushed to Joe's aid.

The rascals, perceiving that the game was up, made no further effort to get away with the satchel, but taking to their legs ran down the stairs as fast as they could go.

Joe started to follow them, but the cashier called him back.

"Let them go. You won't be able to catch them. I got a good look at them, and I'll furnish their description to the police. Now go on and keep a good grip on the satchel going and coming," said Mr. Martin.

The young messenger boarded the first elevator down, and went on his way.

He soon reached the Sub-treasury, secured the gold and brought it to the office without further incident.

In the meantime the cashier had notified the police of the attempted robbery, and half an hour later a detective turned up and questioned both Joe and Mr. Martin very closely.

He went away with a good description of the two men, but what efforts were made to catch them neither Joe nor the cashier ever learned.

That day A. & D. advanced a point.

During the following week it went to 90.

On the succeeding Monday it jumped to 92, and began to attract attention.

The market being buoyant was favorable to it, and it kept on going up.

After it passed 95 Joe began to watch matters closely, for he could only guess how high it would go.

He had all his money up, and he did not want to lose any of the profit already in sight.

The papers generally gave out the impression that it was sure to reach par.

He heard brokers say the same thing.

As there was no indication of a break in the price, he held on.

It hit 100 on the following day and kept right on.

Although Joe had told himself he would surely sell them when it reached that price, he hesitated to do so.

While he debated the matter it went to 102.

It was up to 103 and a fraction when he was sent on an errand up Nassau street.

He dropped in at the little bank and looked at the blackboard.

A profit of \$18 looked too good to run further risk on, so he put in his selling order and went on his way.

He was a lucky boy, for the boom broke half an hour later, and the price went down five points.

He shook hands with himself when he heard about the slump.

He was very well satisfied with the way things had turned out, for he had made a profit of \$1,100.

Next morning's report from Goldfield showed that Little Giant had slumped to ninety cents a share.

"Water always finds its level, and so does an inflated mining stock," said Joe when he saw the report. "I'm sorry for Mrs. Carter, but my sympathy won't do her much good. I wish there was some way for her to get back at Uriah Bolton, but there is about as much chance as there is of finding some of last winter's snow in Wall Street."

He was hurrying down Broad street that noon when he spied Broker Bolton coming toward him.

"The old villain! How respectable he looks! That only goes to show you never can tell what's in a book by its cover. I'd like to get one good punch at him. It would do me a heap of good," thought Joe.

As luck would have it he got his wish, though not in the way he was thinking.

Somebody had just dropped a long apple paring on the sidewalk, and Joe trod on it.

It proved as treacherous as a banana peel.

He slipped and pitched to one side.

His head struck Mr. Bolton squarely in the stomach, and that individual doubled up from the shock and sat down suddenly.

Joe fell across him, but recovered himself.

"I beg your pardon," he said, with a grin.

"Confound you!" roared the broker, as mad as a hornet. "You did that on purpose, you young jackanapes."

"No, sir, I slipped on that apple paring."

"Why didn't you look where you were stepping?"

"I will next time," said Joe, starting on his way.

That evening Joe called on the Widow Carter and told her that her mining stock had tumbled to ninety cents.

"I've been expecting that," she said, sadly. "Two or three brokers told me I had been victimized by an inflated market price."

"You found that you could not force Mr. Bolton to make good?"

"Yes. He was protected by the price when the deal was made."

"I suppose you told the gentlemen that Mr. Bolton suggested the trade?"

"Yes. They made no comment, but they looked as if they thought a lot."

"I'll bet they did. Your 400 shares cost you \$1,170. To-day they are worth only \$360. Mr. Bolton skinned you out of \$810. And he holds the mortgage on your cottage."

"Yes. I wish he didn't."

"He may see his finish yet. Mother says if you give some people rope enough they will hang themselves."

The following day was Saturday, and the office closed about one.

At quarter-past twelve Mr. Preston called Joe into his room and told him he intended to make use of him that afternoon.

"I'm having my summer bungalow put in order, as we are going there early this year," he said. "I have quite a bunch of stuff to go down. I don't care to trust it to the express company, as it's fragile. I want you to go to my house and get it, and take it down to Bunkville, on the New Jersey shore. There is a train from Jersey City at a little after three that stops at Bunkville. The fare is 95 cents each way. Your elevated fare to my house and down to the ferry will be ten cents. Here's a \$2 bill to cover your expenses. I suppose the ride and half a dollar will satisfy you."

Joe knew that his boss was close, but he expected to get at least a dollar.

The ride did not especially appeal to him.

He was asked to put in the whole afternoon for fifty cents.

He thought that was rather small potatoes, but he felt that it was his duty to oblige his employer even if he was not remunerated at all.

He did not know much about Bunkville except that it was a small summer resort where Mr. Preston and his family went every year for the season.

There was no style at Bunkville, that's why Broker Preston went there.

It cost less to dress his wife and grown daughters, and it cost less to live there than at most other seaside resorts.

It boasted a hotel that was open all year round, but it was only a country caravansary where you could get a room and board for ten per during the summer, and for something less at any other time.

As there was shooting in the neighborhood at the proper time, the hotel had many sportsmen from New York, Jersey City and elsewhere, and these people were profitable guests.

At the time the broker sent Joe down with a couple of big bundles marked "glass" there was nothing much going on in Bunkville.

Several of the boarding houses were getting in condition for early visitors, but that was about all the activity noticeable around the village.

Half a dozen bungalows at the north end of the village outskirts represented the exclusive summer section.

Mr. Preston owned the one at the far end.

The other five were rented out by their owners.

Any respectable person willing to put up the price could hire one if he applied at the village real estate office in time.

Joe caught the 3.10 train and landed in Bunkville around four.

His employer had given him a general idea where his bungalow was, but to make sure he asked the station agent.

"Them bungalows are all together over yonder about a mile from here, and on a low bluff overlooking the shore," replied the agent, who had a verdant look, and little to do at that time.

He pointed out the direction and asked Joe if he expected to tote the big bundles all the way to the Preston bungalow himself.

"As I don't see any street car going that way, I s'pose I'll have to," said the young messenger.

"Haw, haw, haw! that's purty good," laughed the agent.

"What's pretty good?" asked Joe.

"What you said about a street car. There hain't no street cars in this village. We don't need 'em. You kin walk from one end of Main street to the other in ten minutes, and that's the hull place you might say."

"I guess I'd better be going."

"Hold on. If you want some help with them bundles, my boy is around here. If you give him a dime he'll help you tote 'em, and take you right to the Preston bungalow."

"All right," replied Joe, "trot him out."

The agent found his son playing "mumble-the-peg" with a lad of his own age, and easily persuaded him to lend the young visitor a hand in exchange for ten cents, which was a princely sum to him.

"Take this package, and mind that you don't drop it. You see it's marked glass, which means that it's easily broken," said Joe.

The agent's son grinned and said he wouldn't drop it, then they started off for the broker's bungalow.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DISCOVERY THAT JOE MADE.

"What's your name, young man?" said Joe, in a friendly way.

"Pete Jenkins," replied the youth.

"Mine is Joe Cook."

"You're from York?"

"Yes, I'm come from there, but I don't live there."

"Where do you live?"

"In Jersey City. I work for Mr. Preston, in Wall Street."

"What do you do?"

"Run errands, mostly."

"How much do you get for that?"

"You mean wages?"

"Yes."

"Eight dollars a week."

"I wish I could get a job like that. I don't see eight dollars in a year."

"You go to school, I suppose?"

"Yes. I'll be through next month for good."

"Glad?"

"Bet your whiskers."

"You'll go to work then?"

"Dad is going to make a surveyor of me."

"That's a good business, I guess."

"I'd sooner have your job. I'm sick of the country. I'd like to go to York and stay. I've heard it's a great place."

"It's quite a town. There's something doing there all the time."

"A fellow can go to the theater every night for a month and see a different show."

"He could easily do that."

"And there are all kinds of sights to be seen."

"That's true, too."

"Have you seen them all?"

"Not a tenth of them."

"Why not? Don't you care to look at them?"

"I'd rather go straight home when I'm through work."

"How long do you work?"

"From nine to about four."

"Those are easy hours."

"It takes me something over an hour to get to the office in the morning, and as long to get back home in the afternoon. We close at one on Saturday, but to-day the boss sent me down here with these bundles."

"He must be coming down early this year. He's had Smith doing some painting this week. There's the bungalows, all in a row. Mr. Preston's is the one at that end."

"They're very much alike."

"The same man built them all."

The bungalows were all closed up just as they had been left at the end of the preceding summer season.

They soon reached the Preston house and walked up the walk and around to the rear.

Here they saw evidence that a painter was, or had been, at work in the building.

Joe tried the back door and found it locked.

He had been provided with a duplicate key, so there was no trouble about his getting in.

Only the kitchen, butler's pantry and dining-room on one side had been painted.

The woodwork of the small sitting-room, however, had been varnished.

A wide hall cut off the four sleeping rooms.

Those rooms were all locked and had not been touched by the painter.

Joe had a key to open the smaller one, so as to put the two bundles away in.

He left Pete Jenkins in the kitchen to await his return and the payment of the promised dime.

Joe opened the chamber door and walked in.

To his surprise he found a table standing in the center of the room littered with beer bottles and three glasses, not to speak of cigar ashes and a stump or two.

The rug showed stains from liquor, tobacco juice, and was well sprinkled with butts and ashes.

The brass bed in the corner had clearly been slept in lately and was badly mussed up.

"Somebody who had no right here has been making free with this room in a shameful way—three somebodies, I should say. I'll have to report this in the village, and when I tell Mr. Preston, he'll have a fit," said Joe, as he put down the two packages. "I wonder if it's safe to leave these bundles here? The intruders might return and walk off with them."

Apparently the intruders had been examining the room, for the closet, left locked, had been jimmied open, and the contents scattered about.

Whether anything had been stolen the boy could not say, but he believed that if anything of real value had been locked up, it was gone.

Several dried chews of tobacco, to which were attached paper figures, had been thrown against the ceiling, and the figures dangled in the air.

The room was certainly in a terrible state, and Joe feared that the other chambers participated in the mix-up to some extent.

The door leading into the next one was open, and the boy walked in there.

Here the bed was also mussed, the closet broken open and the rug more or less soiled.

The third room was in a similar state.

The front and largest room suffered equally with the others.

Joe tried all the windows, and found that only the one in the smaller chamber had been tampered with.

This had been forced by a jimmy.

The boy wondered if the rascals had also made free with the other houses in the row.

That was something for the village constable to investigate.

Joe saw something bright on the rug of the front room, and picked it up.

It was a handsome watch-charm bearing a monogram incrusted with small diamonds.

The principal initial was an M, and that did not stand for Preston.

"It isn't likely this belonged to one of the intruders. Maybe one of them stole it from some other house and accidentally dropped it in here. I'll take charge of it, anyway, and show it to the boss. Perhaps he will identify it," said the boy, dropping it in his pocket.

While Joe was looking over the articles that had been pulled out of the closet in the front room, he saw something that looked like a small handbag under the bed.

He pulled it out and looked at it.

It was a fine Russian leather bag, and bore a small silver plate, on which was engraved a script M.

The fact that both the watch-charm and the bag should have an M attracted Joe's notice.

"I call that a coincidence," he said. "I wonder what's in this bag, and whether it belongs to Mr. Preston?"

Joe, on examining it, found it was locked.

He shook it and heard a rattle inside.

"This might be a small burglar's kit," he thought, "which one of the intruders left here temporarily. Maybe I had better take it to the constable and let him investigate its contents."

After contemplating it for a few minutes, Joe pulled out his jackknife and made an effort to pick the lock.

While he was about it the knife blade slipped and cut a long gash in the leather.

"Now I've done it," he said.

The slit, however, offered him a chance to see what was in the bag, and as his curiosity was on the alert, and an inch or two would make little difference in the slit, he took the liberty of widening it a little.

He shoved three fingers through the crevice and touched something.

Getting a hold on the article, he worked it out of the bag.

To his amazement it proved to be a diamond and pearl necklace, to which was attached a small, golden heart.

On the heart was engraved on one side E and G entwined.

On the reverse, in small letters, "From George to Edith."

"This looks like the plunder of a burglary," thought Joe. "I must see what else is in the bag."

The next thing he drew out was a diamond ornament belonging to a lady.

The third article was a handsome watch and chain, lady's size.

The inside front cover was engraved from "George to Edith," with a date.

Joe made bold to still further enlarge the slit, so he could get his hand inside and expedite matters.

Half a dozen diamond rings and many other valuable articles of jewelry came to light.

The last article was a silver card case, with E and G engraved on it.

Joe tried to open the case, but did not succeed till he tried the bottom.

A dozen cards were in it.

Joe picked one out and looked at it.

It was engraved as follows:

"Mrs. George Gordon, No. 62 W. — street, New York City."

Joe stared at the name fixedly.

"Gordon," he said; "why, that's the name of the banker whose safe was so mysteriously opened on the combination. And that seems like his address, too."

In a moment the boy was all excitement.

"Gee! This may be the jewelry that was taken from the safe. The papers stated that what was stolen belonged to his wife. Heavens! if I'm right I ought to make a good thing out of this, for the banker offered a reward of \$5,000 for the capture of the thief and the recovery of the property. I ought to get half of that at any rate, and half of \$5,000 is a lot of money. I'll take this bag and its contents home with me, and to-morrow I'll call at the banker's house and see if the stuff is his. If it isn't, I can turn it over to the New York police and tell them how it came in my possession."

Joe returned everything to the bag, and stuffing the slit with a piece of cloth, rejoined Pete Jenkins in the kitchen.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STOLEN JEWELS.

"I was getting tired of waiting for you," said Pete.

"Never mind, here's the dime I promised you. Now come with me. I want to show you something. There have been crooks in this house, and they have upset things in the rooms on the other side of the house. I'm going to report the matter to the constable, and I want you to back me up in my statement," said Joe.

Pete was astonished at Joe's words, but he was more astonished when he saw the state the four chambers were in.

"They must have been living here," he said.

"They have slept here at any rate, probably several times. You may expect to see my boss rushing down here Monday morning, or maybe to-morrow afternoon. I shall call at his house in the morning and let him know how I found things. In the meantime, I want the constable to try and catch the rascals, for I am sure they will be back here again, maybe this evening. I guess you have seen all you want to, so we will go, and you can take me to the constable's house."

"I'll do that," replied Pete.

With the leather bag in his hand, Joe left the bungalow with his companion, locked the back door and started back for the village proper.

They walked fast, and in fifteen minutes reached the constable's home.

That officer, who had little to do except patrol around in the daytime like a gentleman of leisure, was at home.

He had an assistant who patrolled the village and environs at night, starting in at eight and quitting at five in the morning.

The pair comprised the entire police force of Bunkville, and in the estimation of the inhabitants they enjoyed a sinecure, for nothing ever happened to cause them any undue exertion.

That's what Pete told Joe on the way back, and the New York lad replied that the Bunkville force had a chance now to show what they were worth.

Constable Smith answered Pete's ring himself.

"Well, Jenkins, what do you want?" asked the officer, with a curious glance at Joe, whom he saw was a stranger in that burgh.

"This is Joe Cook, of New York. He brought a couple of bundles down which he and I carried to the Preston bungalow. He's got something to tell you," said Pete.

"What is it, young man?" asked the constable.

"It's a matter of importance which I don't care to mention out here. If you will invite us in I'll tell you the whole story," said Joe.

Mr. Smith took the hint and asked them into his living-room, where his wife was setting the table for supper.

Joe, after explaining that he was Mr. Preston's office boy, lost no time in telling the officer of the state of affairs at the Preston bungalow.

"Judging from the looks of things, three men have been there for several nights at least, and they have made the sleeping rooms look like thirty cents. As the closets have been forced open and their contents scattered about, I judge they are crooks. The fact that a painter has been at work during the day on the other side of the bungalow doesn't seem to have bothered them much. From certain indications I believe they intend to spend some further time in the house. That will give you the chance to watch for them and nab them if they show up."

Joe added that he would call on the broker in the morning and tell him what he had discovered, so that the constable might expect to see him down there on the following afternoon, or on Monday morning at the latest.

"You are sure there were three men in the bungalow?" said Officer Smith.

"I judge so from the fact that three chairs were drawn up at the table, and there were three glasses containing the dregs of beer. Then three beds have been slept in, while the bed in the front room is mussed up. I think you will find that there are three in the bunch if you get a sight of them."

"I'll have to take a couple of men out there besides my assistant," said the constable.

"You'd better, if you want to make a sure job of it."

"Are you going back to New York on the next local?"

"I live in Jersey City, and now that I have notified you of the situation, I guess there is no particular need of me calling on the boss till the morning. It will take me an hour and a half to reach home after I leave here. As the next train stops at a quarter of seven, it will be after eight when I reach my house."

Constable Smith had more than once publicly expressed the wish that a chance would offer for him to distinguish himself in the interest of his fellow citizens who contributed their dollars toward his support.

The opportunity appeared to have arrived at last, but Mr. Smith did not look as if he was tickled to death at the idea.

As a matter of fact, he was merely throwing a bluff when he said he yearned for the chance to show his mettle.

Trying to capture three real crooks, who were probably armed, was not a picnic, and Mr. Smith did not relish the work he was up against.

However, he had to do his duty or he would be in danger of losing his snap, so he told Joe that as soon as he had had a bite to eat he would get on the job, and that if the rascals showed up it would go hard with them.

Joe and Pete then took their leave and went on to the station.

Pete kept his new acquaintance company until the local train stopped and the Wall Street boy got aboard.

An hour and a half later he walked into the house.

"Why, Joe, what has kept you so late on Saturday as this?" said his mother.

"The boss sent me down to his bungalow at Bunkville," he answered. "I had to go to his house first to get two big packages, and I did not leave the office till half-past twelve, and I had to get some lunch before I started."

While eating his supper, which his mother had saved for him in the oven, Joe gave his mother and two of his sisters a full account of his trip.

He told about the state he had found the sleeping rooms in, and finally he produced the Russian leather bag and dumped all the jewelry out before their astonished eyes.

"I am certain this is the plunder taken from Banker Gordon's house. You remember the case, mother. We had some talk about it at the time. I don't remember the street mentioned by the papers, but it was one of the West Seventies, and you can see from the lady's visiting card that she lives in one of those streets. It is hardly likely that there are two George Gordons living within a block or two of each other, so we may put it down as a safe bet that these jewels are the stolen ones. He's offered a reward of \$5,000, and I think I'm entitled to half of that."

"Dear me, that would make you quite rich," said his eldest sister.

"We'll talk about that if I get it. I'm going to call at the banker's to-morrow after I see Mr. Preston and acquaint him with the state of affairs at his bungalow."

The jewelry was examined and admired, and then Joe returned it to the bag and put it under his bed.

After breakfast, about nine o'clock, next morning, Joe started for New York with the bag done up in a piece of wrapping paper.

He went directly to his boss' home and was admitted by the maid, who showed him into the small library, where Mr. Preston was reading the newspaper.

The broker was surprised to see him.

"What brings you here this morning? You didn't break anything in one of those packages, did you?"

"No, sir. I carried them to your bungalow all right and left them there."

"Then what is the cause of this visit?"

"The condition I found part of the bungalow in."

"Eh? What do you mean?"

Then Joe told him the facts, and the broker nearly went off his perch, as the saying is.

"What did you do about it?" he asked the boy. "Did you call on the village constable and tell him?"

"I did, and he said he would take a couple of men and lay for the rascals."

"The closets have been forced, you say, and what was in them turned out?"

"Yes, but I don't know if anything was taken away. You know whether there was anything in the closets that would tempt the men."

The broker walked up and down the room once or twice, and then rushed upstairs to tell his wife the unpleasant news.

Mrs. Preston came down with him to learn the particulars from Joe.

She said that they had left nothing of any great value in the closets, and judged that the thieves had been disappointed in their search.

"What's that package?" asked Mr. Preston, pointing at the leather bag done up in paper. "Did you bring that from the bungalow?"

"That's a leather bag I'm taking over to a place near here," replied Joe, who did not care to tell the true facts about the bag to his employer until he had definitely established the ownership of the jewelry it contained.

"Huh!" ejaculated the broker. "You think the men will return to the bungalow, and that the constable will catch them?"

"I think he stands a good show of nabbing them if he goes to work about it right. They've been acting as if they owned the house, which shows the great nerve they have. I judge that they stay there at night and go somewhere else in the daytime."

Mr. Preston decided that he would have to go down to the bungalow right away and see with his own eyes just how things were.

He dismissed Joe and started to get ready for the trip.

Joe, with the bundle under his arm, walked around to Banker Gordon's residence, only a few blocks away.

It was a handsome, four-story brownstone front, with a basement a few feet below the level of the sidewalk, and separated from it by an areaway.

A flight of stone steps led up to the stoop where the hall door was.

Joe rang the front door bell and, after a short delay, a maid appeared.

"Is Mr. George Gordon at home?" the boy inquired.

"He is. Give me your name and I will take it to him," said the maid, telling Joe to walk in and seat himself on a chair in the entrance hall.

She then went away with the visitor's name, and the additional information that he was a Wall Street messenger employed by Broker Edward Preston.

She returned presently and told Joe to follow her.

"He was ushered into a large and splendid library room at the back of the parlors.

It was furnished with a desk and a string of bookcases filled with volumes on all sorts of subjects.

Bronze busts of noted ancient and modern characters stood around the room, and on top of the bookcases.

There were also a number of pictures on the walls.

In an easy chair sat a distinguished-looking, white-haired gentleman of perhaps sixty in a velvet smoking jacket and slippers.

This was Banker Gordon, and he looked inquiringly at the visitor.

"I beg your pardon for intruding, Mr. Gordon," said Joe, seating himself in the chair pointed out by the master of the house, "but I have called to see you about a matter of great importance."

"Indeed," replied the gentleman, regarding him curiously, "may I ask what it is?"

"I believe you are the gentleman whose safe was robbed a short time ago?"

The banker nodded with a look of some surprise.

"I read about the robbery in the newspapers at the time it happened," went on Joe. "I noticed that there was a mystery about the opening of the safe which the papers said was done on the combination, and since then I have not heard that the thief or thieves were caught or the stolen property recovered."

The banker looked as if he was wondering what all this had to do with the presence of his young visitor.

As Joe was well dressed, had a frank and engaging face, and asserted he was employed in Wall Street by Broker Preston, the gentleman felt he was entitled to a hearing, and awaited further explanation on his part.

Joe then proceeded to tell him that on the previous afternoon his employer sent him down to his bungalow at Bunkville with a couple of packages, and that when he reached the house he found it partly upset from the visits of several intruders who had made free with one entire side of the house.

"As the closets had been broken open and their contents scattered about, I judged the men were crooks. I naturally felt it my duty to Mr. Preston to make an examination of the misused part of the bungalow, and this search turned up something that I think will interest you."

"Ah!" ejaculated the banker, beginning to show some interest.

"To begin with, I found a handsome watch-charm with the letter M made out of chip diamonds."

"Did you bring that with you?" said the banker, quickly, while a strange look settled on his face.

"Yes, sir. Here it is. I don't say it has any particular interest for you, but it might."

Mr. Gordon took the charm, and he showed undisguised evidences of emotion as he gazed upon it.

"I recognize this," he said, "and it is with great regret I do. It confirms a suspicion that I have—"

He stopped and laid the charm on his desk.

"Go on," he said in husky tones.

"The next thing I found was a Russian leather handbag, which, singular to say, also had a letter M on it engraved on a silver plate. I have brought it with me in this paper."

"Let me look at it."

"In a moment, sir. From the description of the bag, do you recognize it as your property?"

"I recognize it, but it is not my property."

"Your wife's, then?"

"No. It is the property of an inmate of my house, a relative."

"Do you mean the young man referred to by the newspapers as your step-son?"

The banker hesitated before finally replying in the affirmative.

"If the bag is his, then the watch-charm is his, too, I take it. I remember now his name was printed as Manson. That begins with the letter M."

Mr. Gordon made no reply.

"Will you show me a list of the jewelry stolen from your safe?" said Joe.

The banker went to his desk, took a printed slip from a pigeon-hole, and handed it to the boy.

Joe ran it over and saw that most of the articles mentioned were in the bag.

He tore the paper off the bag and handed it to the banker.

"You will find nearly all the stolen jewelry in that bag, sir, and it gives me great pleasure to restore it to you."

Mr. Gordon uttered an exclamation.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FINISH OF THE JEWEL THIEF.

"Is that true?" he said, in a tone of surprise and with a look of wonder.

"Yes, sir. You see the leather has been slit. I made that hole accidentally while trying to pry open the lock with my pocket knife. In comparing the articles with your list, I see there are a few pieces missing. I hope you won't think I have

held them out. I assure you that everything I found in the bag is there now."

"I do not doubt you, my lad. Hand me the list."

Joe did so.

The banker removed the contents of the bag and compared them with the list, checking off each item.

"The few articles missing are of the least value," he said.

"Now tell me exactly how you came to find the bag."

Joe told him every particular.

Mr. Gordon was satisfied.

"The identity of the thief is now plain to me," he said. "I suspected the person, who I may as well confess to you is my step-son, though it is with pain and mortification I make the admission, but the proof was lacking. I ask you as a favor to say nothing about it until the truth comes out, which it must as soon as I have communicated with the police."

"If you wish to screen the young man, will it be necessary to tell all the facts to the police? You have the bag and the watch-charm. That is the evidence against him. Why not tell the police that the stolen property has been returned to you on the quiet?"

"I'm afraid the police will insist on a full explanation. The property is worth about \$75,000, and they will reason that an ordinary burglar would not restore it unless I compromised with him by paying him a large cash reward and asking no questions. It is against the law for a person to make such an agreement with a thief, though I admit it is often done. I will see what can be done, and thank you for your suggestion. In the meanwhile I will rely on your secrecy in the matter. And now I will pay you the reward of \$5,000 which I offered the detectives. You are justly entitled to it."

"The reward called for the capture of the thief. I have not caught him."

"You have practically done so, for you have furnished me with the evidence that exposes his identity, and if I chose to have him arrested, it would be a matter of little trouble for a detective to find him. In fact, I expect he will report at my bank as usual in the morning, as he has no reason to believe that he is even suspected."

"He might be already in the hands of the Bunkville constable. I put that person on to what happened at Mr. Preston's bungalow, and he and his assistant, with other help, were to lie in wait for the intruders last night and capture them if they appeared at the house, as I expected they would."

"If my step-son is caught in that house with his questionable companions, that will compromise him, and full exposure will follow."

"It will certainly put him in a bad fix. Mr. Preston will prosecute him, for he is awfully mad over what has happened, and he will be twice as mad when he sees how his property has been ruined. He is going down to Bunkville to-day to look into the situation."

"My step-son will have to face whatever misfortune he has brought upon himself."

"He is living with you, I believe?"

"Yes, but he has not slept here for a matter of ten days, though he has been at the bank with his customary regularity."

"That indicates, in connection with the watch-charm and the bag of stolen jewelry, that he has been down at Bunkville with two associates making a rendezvous of Mr. Preston's bungalow."

"There seems to be no doubt of that fact," said the banker, walking to his desk, where he wrote his check for \$5,000, payable to Joe's order.

The boy protested that he was not entitled to so much, and said that half the sum would suit him, but the banker insisted on his taking it.

There being nothing further to detain him, he took his leave and hurried home to show the check to his mother.

His mother and sisters were delighted when they saw it.

"You are a lucky boy," said his sister Nellie. "What are you going to do with all that money? You had better turn it over to mother."

"If she needs money she can always get it from me," replied Joe.

"You ought to let her use some of it to pay off the mortgage on this cottage."

"I don't believe she can pay it till it's due. However, I am willing to do the right thing. We only owe \$500. I will give mother that to put in the bank so she can pay the debt when it becomes due."

"And the rest you intend to bank for yourself?"

"Yes. What else would I do with it?"

As his family were not aware of his speculative tendencies,

his answer seemed conclusive to them, so nothing was said about it.

In the meantime Broker Preston hurried down to Bunkville and found the village much excited over the capture of two men who were caught in the Preston bungalow the night before.

A third man had made his escape.

The two men were brought before the justice and pleaded not guilty of wrongdoing.

Their defence was that they were drunk and were hazy as to their movements.

In fact, from the state of the bungalow, and the story told by Joe Cook to the constable the afternoon previous, which statement led to the capture of the men, no faith was put in their pleas, especially as they had shown no signs of being drunk when surprised in the house.

They were held for further investigation and locked up in the small jail, which had not had a tenant for a long time.

One of the prisoners was a young man of particularly gentlemanly appearance and manners, and he was regarded with no small interest by the spectators who attended the examination of the pair in the justice's office.

He gave his name as William Brown, but declined furnishing any further information about himself.

Broker Preston was glad to hear that two of the intruders in his bungalow had been captured, and he complimented Constable Smith on his zeal in the matter.

The officer had already accumulated a swelled head over his success, though he had gone into the enterprise with some misgivings.

He walked around the village that afternoon as though he owned it, and accepted the compliments of his friends in a patronizing way, as if it were an everyday thing for him to catch a crook or two.

He walked to the bungalow with the broker, and when Mr. Preston saw the devastation wantonly inflicted on his property, which would cost him two or three hundred dollars to restore, he was as mad as a hornet.

He swore he would prosecute the prisoners to the limit of the law.

On his return to the village he was permitted to see the prisoners.

He was surprised at the gentlemanly appearance of the young man who claimed William Brown as his name.

Brown assured him that his being at his bungalow was all a mistake, and insisted that neither he nor his companion had been there before, or were guilty of the depredations committed.

Mr. Preston remained at the hotel all night, and next morning the two prisoners were removed to the county jail.

Soon after his arrival at the county jail, Brown sent a telegram signed "Howard" to George Gordon, the Wall Street private banker, stating that he had got into some trouble at Bunkville village on Saturday night, and he wished that somebody would be sent to the county seat, where he was now in jail, to bail him out.

Banker Gordon, on receipt of the telegram, which stated that the bail had been fixed at \$500, sent his chief clerk with that sum in cash to secure the release of his step-son, for William Brown was really Howard Manson.

The clerk saw the judge who had fixed the bail, signed the necessary papers, put up the money, and Manson was let out.

The young man declined returning with the clerk to New York, giving as his excuse that he had some business to transact in Bunkville.

He told the clerk that he would be back by a later train.

The business he had in Bunkville was to visit the bungalow and recover the leather bag containing the stolen jewels which he believed were still under the bed in the front room.

He made his way to the bungalow by a roundabout route, avoiding the village proper, where he knew he would be recognized.

He found no one near the house, and discovered that the window through which he and his companions had entered had not been fixed up.

Entering the bungalow, he looked for the bag, but of course, much to his consternation, did not find it.

He could only infer that the constable had found and taken possession of it.

If that was true, it was out of his reach.

He was rather surprised that it had not been produced at his examination before the justice.

While he was thinking the matter over, it suddenly occurred to him that the man who escaped might have returned to the

bungalow after the constable's party marched him and the other prisoner to the lock-up and carried it off.

The more he figured on the question the more certain he felt that this was the case, and he felt a bit relieved, for had the constable got hold of the bag and opened it, he (Manson) would have been in a tight fix as soon as the New York police learned that the Gordon jewels had turned up under circumstances that must have connected him with the bag.

He walked the ties to the station nearest to Bunkville and took a train for Jersey City.

He reached the bank early in the afternoon and went to his desk, unconscious that his step-father had full evidence connecting him with the jewel robbery.

When his step-father returned from his lunch, Manson went into his room and gave him a plausible explanation of the trouble he got in at Bunkville.

The banker made no comment, but asked him if he would be home to dinner that evening.

He said he would, and he kept his word.

After dinner his step-father called him into the library, and the interview that followed was painful to both.

"You have forfeited my confidence and respect, Howard," said the banker, "so the only thing for you to do is to leave the State before the police get a true inkling of your guilt. I will give you \$5,000 at the bank in the morning. Pack your effects this evening and take a forenoon train to-morrow for the Far West. I trust that under your changed conditions you will turn over a new leaf and make a man of yourself. That is all. Good-evening."

CHAPTER IX.

JOE QUILTS PRESTON'S EMPLOY.

Howard Manson took the \$5,000 from his step-father next day, and when noon came he was on a limited express bound for Chicago.

His ultimate destination was San Francisco.

He made a mistake in abandoning his less fortunate companion held in jail in the New Jersey county seat.

That individual soon heard that the young man was out on bail, and he waited for Manson to send somebody to bail him out, too.

Nobody came, so he communicated with some of his friends, and, after a good deal of trouble, the necessary \$500 was put up and he was released.

Then he started to find Manson.

He discovered that the young man had left the bank, and the city as well.

Suspecting that he carried the stolen jewels with him, and that his purpose was to shake his two pals, the crook decided to get square, so he wrote a letter to the chief of the New York police, detailing how the safe in the Gordon house had been opened, and who had committed the crime.

A detective immediately called on the banker and interviewed him.

Although Mr. Gordon professed to believe his step-son innocent of the crime, he would not state where the young man had gone.

He finally reluctantly admitted that he had recovered the greater part of the stolen property, but would not say how he got it back.

The police didn't like his reticence, and threatened to make trouble for him.

Then he admitted the truth—that his step-son was the thief, and that the jewels were recovered through the instrumentality of Joe Cook.

To give his step-son a chance to reform, he had sent him away to parts unknown.

Joe Cook was sent for to Police Headquarters, and his story extracted from him.

He admitted he received the \$5,000 reward, and had kept his mouth shut because the banker asked him to.

The police gave the whole story to the newspapers, taking their revenge on the banker in this way, knowing that the publicity would hit him hard.

Of course, the papers made a sensation out of it, and all Wall Street learned that Broker Preston's office boy had recovered the stolen Gordon jewels and made \$5,000 thereby.

Naturally, Mr. Preston read the story, and as he wasn't in a particularly good humor, he resented the part Joe had played in the affair.

It grieved him to think that the boy had found the jewels hidden in his bungalow, and never said a word to him about it.

And the boy had never let on that he had come in possession of the \$5,000.

THE BOY BEHIND THE DEALS.

Taking it altogether, he had a big bone to pick with Joe when he arrived at his office that morning, and he proceeded to pick it without delay.

The boy defended his course of action to the best of his ability.

He said Banker Gordon had requested him to keep his mouth shut in order to keep the story out of the newspapers.

And also with the view of saving his step-son from the consequences of his crime.

Joe's argument was a good one, but Mr. Preston was not in a humor to listen to anything from his office boy.

"Where did you find the bag containing the jewels in my house?"

"Under the bed, in the front room," replied Joe.

"The bag was locked, wasn't it?"

"It was."

"Then how did you know the Gordon jewels were in it?"

"I didn't know, but I suspected that it held stolen property of some kind, so I started to pick the lock in order—"

"What right had you to pick the lock? How did you know but it was my property? Anyway, you should have handed it over to the constable," roared the broker.

"What difference does it make now what I should have done when I really did the right thing, and thereby put Banker Gordon in the way of getting his property back?"

"Don't talk to me in that independent way, you young monkey!"

"But, sir, I am only—"

"Shut up! I've heard enough from you. Get outside and attend to your business. I've half a mind to get a new office boy."

"Why don't you?" retorted Joe, who, being worth a matter of \$6,000, didn't care much whether he stayed with Broker Preston any longer or not.

In fact, he was tired of being bully-ragged by that gentleman, when he had one of his periodical gourches on, and had been seriously thinking of throwing up his job.

"Eh? What's that you said?" demanded the broker.

"I said why don't you get another boy if you aren't satisfied with me?"

"I will. You can quit right now. I wouldn't have you around here another day if you offered to work for nothing."

Mr. Preston didn't mean that.

To tell the truth, he didn't mean half the things he said when he was angry.

Joe, however, took him right up.

"All right, sir. I'll quit. I can afford to take a vacation, as it's coming on summer and there won't be much doing in Wall Street when the weather gets hot. I think I'll rent a bungalow myself and take my mother and—"

"Get out of my office!" howled Mr. Preston.

"I'm going," grinned Joe, opening the door and stepping out into the waiting-room.

There was two days' wages coming to him, but he did not bother about collecting it.

He just put on his hat and walked out as independent as a hog on ice.

Reaching the street, he walked as far as the little bank, and went in.

There was a fair-sized crowd of habitues present watching the blackboard at the end of the room.

Joe sat down and watched the board, too.

He noticed that everybody was interested in L. & M., which was going up.

Speculators were buying it right and left.

In two days it had gone up five points.

The boy concluded to take a shy at it, too, but as the rise might not hold out, he went in cautiously to the extent of only 200 shares.

When Joe went to lunch, three hours later, the stock had advanced one point more.

He was returning leisurely to the little bank after eating a light lunch when he met Sam Wells.

"Hello, Joe, you seem to be taking things easy for once," said Sam, who was accustomed to seeing Joe always more or less on the jump.

"I am. I've lots of time to-day," replied Joe.

"That's something new with you when the market is humming. Is business slow at your joint?"

"Not that I know of."

"Maybe the story which appeared in the papers about you this morning has affected your feet. I never was more surprised in my life than when I read that you were the party who recovered the jewelry stolen awhile ago from Banker

Gordon's house, and that you received the reward of \$5,000. I suppose it's true?"

"Yes. I found the banker's property as described, and he paid me the money."

"What did you do with such a lot of cash? Turn it over to your mother?"

"I'm not saying what I did with it. Maybe I intend starting a bank."

"Five thousand dollars wouldn't go far in that direction unless your idea was to start a bootblacks and newsboys' bank, then it might do."

"Or Wall Street messengers' bank?"

"We messengers have no use for a bank. There aren't many of them who could rake enough spare cash together to open an account."

"How do you know that? Are you judging them by yourself?"

"I haven't met many who had any superfluous cash. Where are you going now?"

"Up to the little bank."

"Got a deal on or are you going into one?"

"I've gone into L. & M., which is on the rise."

"It's mighty risky going into the speculative business, particularly when you can't look after your investment. Then your boss might find out about it and there'd be something doing."

"I'm not worrying about any boss at present."

"You haven't quit Preston, have you?"

"I have."

"When did that happen?"

"This morning."

"What was the trouble?"

"Oh, we had one of our usual scraps, but he was a lot more unreasonable than usual. He finally remarked that he had a good mind to get another office boy. I asked him why he didn't if I was not suiting him. That made him mad, and he told me to get out. He'll change his mind later, and will probably send a letter to my house asking me to return, but I don't think I'll accept the invitation. I'm tired of working for Preston. He's sure to be disagreeable at least once a week, and he expects all hands to stand for it and say nothing. The rest of the force can do it if they want, but I'm about through."

"With \$5,000 to call on you can afford to be independent. I suppose you won't look for another job till summer is over? I wouldn't if I stood in your shoes. I'd go to some summer resort and put in the whole season there enjoying myself. A fellow might as well have a good time when he can afford it."

Joe said he did not know what he would do, but he did not believe he would look for another position until later on.

"I expect to make something out of this L. & M. deal," he added. "Maybe four or five hundred dollars. That will pay my summer expenses and that of my folks at some quiet resort where there is more comfort than style."

Sam recollects that he was losing time, and he broke away, while Joe went on to the little bank and spent the rest of the afternoon there until the exchanges closed.

The last quotation of the day for L. & M. showed an advance of a point and a half above what Joe paid for it, which was quite satisfactory to him.

He went home at his usual time, but said nothing to his mother about his having left the employ of Broker Preston.

He was accustomed to leave the house at a little after eight in the morning.

It took him about fifty minutes to reach Wall Street.

He left at his usual time next morning so his mother wouldn't think anything had gone wrong with him, and meeting the postman on the way, got a letter from him bearing the office stamp.

He guessed the broker had written, telling him to come back.

Such was the case.

Joe, however, did not feel like going back, at least not right away.

He was \$300 ahead on his stock deal, and as he had \$2,000 up he did not feel that he could afford to take any chances with it.

It had to be watched closely so that if the price showed any indication of dropping he could sell out on the minute.

It wouldn't be possible for him to look at it if he returned to his office duties.

What was \$8 a week compared with a possible profit of \$500 or \$600 inside of a few days?

He soon made up his mind to stay away from Preston's until he had closed out his stock transaction, and if he made a good profit he guessed he wouldn't go back, anyway.

So he paid no attention to the broker's letter, but went straight to the little bank and sat down with the early comers up near the blackboard.

CHAPTER X.

JOE RENTS HALF AN OFFICE.

Broker Preston made no effort to hire another boy, for he fully expected that his letter would bring Joe back with a rush.

As the day passed away and the boy failed to turn up, Preston was surprised, then he figured that Joe must have left home before the letter-carrier delivered the letter at his house.

The junior clerk, much to his disgust, was compelled to carry messages and packages around that day.

But for the fact that Joe was at the office for an hour and appeared to be in his usual health the day before, the office force would have supposed he was sick.

As it was, the only way they could account for his unexpected disappearance was by supposing Mr. Preston had sent him on an errand out of town.

Of course, they had all read about Joe's connection with the recovery of the Gordon jewels, and how he had received \$5,000 in consequence, and they all envied his luck, but they did not connect the matter with his absence from the office.

Joe was coming from lunch and feeling good over a further advance of two points in L. & M., which put him \$700 ahead of the game, when he ran into the junior clerk, who was out on an errand with an envelope in his hand.

"Well," said the clerk, whose name was Morgan, "why aren't you at the office? I've had to attend to your business, as well as my own, since yesterday morning."

"The exercise won't hurt you," laughed Joe.

"Maybe not, but I don't care to run your errands. I'm a clerk now, and not a messenger. What are you doing on the outside for the boss?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing? What do you mean by that?"

"I'm not working for Mr. Preston now."

"The dickens you're not! We all supposed that the boss had sent you out of town. Did you have a scrap with him yesterday morning?"

"We had a few words—that is, Mr. Preston did about all the talking, as he usually does—and I quit."

"He was in a horrible humor yesterday," the cashier said, "though he didn't bother us much in the counting-room, and he's still grouchy. Did you leave or did he fire you?"

"You had better ask him if you're desirous of knowing."

"Me ask him? I guess not. Are you out for good?"

"I got a letter from Mr. Preston this morning telling me to report to-day as usual."

"Why didn't you do it, then?"

"Because I've got some private business to attend to."

"Will you be around in the morning?"

"I think it is very doubtful. I haven't decided whether I will return at all. He is a hard man to get along with."

"We all read how you made \$5,000 by recovering the jewels stolen by Banker Gordon's step-son, Howard Manson. I guess the possession of so much money is the real reason why you quit the office. You can afford to be independent."

"You can figure the matter out to suit yourself."

"Well, that's my opinion."

"You'd better run along now, as you're acting as office boy for the time being, or you might have a run-in with the boss, too, for wasting time."

"Aw, rats!"

"There are no rats about it. He's pulled my wig a hundred times because I stayed out on some errand longer than he thought necessary. Sometimes he would be sarcastic over it and ask me if I had stopped to watch a dog-fight, or something of that kind. In any case, his remarks are never pleasant. That's why I'm not sure that I'll give him any more opportunities to howl at me."

"If you're not coming back you ought to tell him so he can hire another boy. I don't care to run around like a kid."

"What do you care as long as you get twice the pay of a messenger?"

"Don't you suppose that it makes me feel cheap?"

"You won't be kept at it long, so there is no reason why you should feel put out. Give my regards to the other clerks, and tell them not to weep if they don't see me at the office any more."

Joe laughed again and walked off toward the little bank, where he found a seat well up front, and remained till a little after three.

L. & M. closed at 99 3-8 that day, and as the market was stiff there seemed little doubt of it going above par next day.

At half-past eleven next day L. & M. reached 100 3-8.

It was Saturday, and Joe concluded to sell, as he saw his way to making \$1,000, and he could not tell what might happen before Monday to cause a change in the market when it opened up for business.

Accordingly, he put his selling order in, and his shares were sold at 100 1-2 inside of fifteen minutes.

Having nothing else to do, he remained at the little bank till noon came, and business stopped for the day.

He felt hungry and went to his quick-lunch house for a bite. He found Sam Wells there perched on a stool.

"Still your own boss, Joe?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Why don't you go in business for yourself?"

"What doing?"

"Hire an office and throw a bluff as a new broker. You've got \$5,000 at your back."

"I'd need a whole lot more than \$5,000 to make such a bluff go. Do you know what rents are in the office buildings?"

"Pretty steep. But you wouldn't need a whole room. You could hire desk room cheap, have your name put on the door, and your mail would be delivered there. After getting a start you could rent a room to yourself. If you haven't nerve enough to pose as a broker, you could use the office as your headquarters and put in your time speculating.) You'd make a whole lot more with your capital than working for wages," said Sam. "Here, take this book home and read it to-morrow. It is about a messenger who started out for himself as a broker with a small capital and made a million before he reached twenty-one. Maybe it will give you a tip."

Joe took the book, looked at the title and then slipped it in his pocket.

In the Sunday morning paper he saw an advertisement that attracted his notice.

A young lady stenographer wanted a responsible person to rent a small office with her in Wall Street, replies to be sent care of the paper.

That afternoon Joe read the story of the boy broker who made a million and was fascinated by it.

The boy, however, made most of the money through fortunate speculations in the market.

He started with a small office, gradually acquired customers, and finally built up a business which enabled him to rent a suite of rooms and hire clerks.

It looked easy if things ran right, and they certainly ran right for the hero of the book.

The part which Joe liked best of all was the trick the hero played upon a trader of the Uriah Bolton class and beat him at his own game.

"If I thought I could work Bolton that way I'd start right in to-morrow," said Joe. "Nothing would give me greater satisfaction than to pay that rascal up for swindling Mrs. Carter."

That evening Joe wrote a note to the young lady stenographer asking for an interview.

He received a reply Tuesday morning, and was directed to call on her at a lawyer's office in Wall Street at five that afternoon.

Joe called and asked for Miss Risdon.

He was taken into a small room and found a very pretty girl just finishing up her work for the day.

"You want a responsible person to share the rent of an office with you?" said Joe, politely.

"Yes," replied the girl; "who is the person you represent? I would have preferred to have seen them in person, for I am particular who I go in with."

"I represent myself. I am willing to pay half the rent of a small office for the privilege of having a headquarters where I can get my mail."

"You!" cried the girl, in some surprise. "Are you in business?"

"Yes."

"What business?"

"Speculating in stocks."

"Are you responsible? Are you able to pay your half of the rent regularly?"

"If the rent is reasonable. I am worth about \$7,000."

The girl stated what the rent of the room was she expected to take, and said she was going to start up as a public stenographer.

She had the promise of enough work to make the business go.

Joe said he was willing to pay half of the rent in question,

and would furnish up his half with a rug, desk and such other things as he would need.

"Can you give me a reference?" said the girl.

"Sure. You can call on George Gordon, banker. He knows me."

The girl made a note of his reference, which looked to be pretty good, and after some further talk he went away, after arranging to return on the following afternoon.

He got the name of the building where the vacant office was, and its number.

"The janitor will let you see it. Mention my name to him," said the young lady as he bowed himself out.

Next forenoon Joe called on Banker Gordon and told him he had taken the liberty of giving him as reference.

"Are you after a new position?"

"No, sir. I'm after an office."

"An office!"

"Yes. I expect to take one with a young lady who is going into the public stenographer business."

"And what business are you going in?"

"I'm going to try and make a start as a broker."

"Indeed. Have you had the necessary experience?"

"I've had all the experience I'm likely to need for awhile to come."

"And have you capital enough to make a beginning?"

"I have capital enough to do all the business I see in sight."

His answer was rather ambiguous, but the banker did not press the question.

"Who is going to call on me about you?" he asked.

"The young lady. She wants to assure herself that I will pay the rent regularly."

The banker smiled.

"I presume you are able to do that until the end of the year?"

"Yes, sir. I hope you will back me up."

"I am perfectly willing to do that. What rent do you expect to pay?"

Joe told him what his share would be.

The banker said if the young lady wanted a guarantee he would give it up to the end of the year.

"I don't ask you to be responsible for me, sir."

"That's all right. It is only a small matter, and will probably cost me nothing, anyway, for I guess you'll come up to the scratch."

Joe assured him there would be no trouble on that score, and then he got up and left.

Miss Ridley called on the banker and received such a favorable statement of Joe that she was satisfied to take him in with her.

She told him so when he called that afternoon.

On the following day she signed the lease in her own name, and Joe put up his share of the first month's rent.

The rest of the week was spent in furnishing the office up.

After the sign painter had fixed up the door it read as follows:

MISS RIDLEY, PUBLIC STENOGRAPHER.
JOSEPH COOK, STOCKS AND BONDS.

By Saturday everything was shipshape about the little office, and Joe felt a glow of importance when he looked at his name on the door and felt that he was his own boss in earnest now.

And he thought what a surprise the news would give his mother and sisters when he told them he had quit Broker Preston and was out for himself.

CHAPTER XI.

JOE GETS URIAH BOLTON IN A TRAP.

It was now the first week in June, and there was little doing in the market.

The collapse of the L. & M. boom soon after Joe sold his shares had put a temporary damper on it.

Joe had notified Mr. Preston in writing that he wasn't coming back, so the old man hired a new boy.

The new boy didn't do half as well as Joe, owing to lack of experience, and Preston got so disgusted that he discharged him and hired another boy.

In fact, he had four different boys during the rest of the year, and he was not satisfied with the last one.

Joe, in the meanwhile, spent the greater part of his time at the little bank watching the course of the market.

Finally he switched around and went down to the Curb.

There he got acquainted with a broker named Jackson, who learned from him that he had an office and was in the speculative field.

One afternoon Jackson called with another trader to see the boy's office and size him up generally.

He had a lot of cheap mining stock he wanted to unload on somebody, and he thought Joe would be an easy proposition.

After a short talk he got around to the object of his visit.

"What are you buying now, Cook?" he asked.

"Nothing at present."

"But you seem to be interested in mining stock?"

"I am interested in anything I can see a profit in."

"Then you can't do better than get in on Tar Flat or Green River."

"Then I suppose you are in on them?"

"I don't speculate myself, as it takes all my money to run my office. I have 10,000 shares of Tar Flat I can let you have for ten cents, or if you prefer Green River, I have a big block of that you can have for 15 cents. I will sell you from 1,000 shares up of either."

"I'll consider your offer and let you know," said Joe, who had no intention of buying either.

"If you'll take either of them now I'll let you have them for nine cents. That will save you \$100, and everything counts in the mining stock business," said Jackson.

Joe shook his head.

He wasn't biting at such bait.

Hardly had the gentlemen taken their departure when, to Joe's surprise, Uriah Bolton walked in.

Somebody had told the old fox about Joe, and as Bolton never let a chance slip by him, he made it his business to call on the boy and see if he couldn't sell him a bunch of Tar Flat he had been hawking around for some time without finding a customer for it.

Joe hadn't seen the broker since the day he butted into him on Broad street.

When Bolton looked at the boy he thought his face looked familiar to him, but he couldn't say where he had met him before.

"My name is Bolton," he said, handing Joe his business card.

"Glad to know you, Mr. Bolton," said Joe, which wasn't exactly the truth. "Sit down and make yourself at home."

Bolton sat down, took off his silk hat and mopped his bald head, for it was a warm afternoon.

"I heard you were buying mining stocks as a speculation," said the broker. "As I have a few good propositions myself, I thought I would call on you."

"What do you call good propositions?"

"I might mention Tar Flat at ten cents."

"I've just been offered 10,000 shares at nine," replied Joe.

"By whom?"

"Broker Jackson. He was here about ten minutes ago."

"You didn't take them, eh?"

"I told him I would think his offer over."

"I can let you have 10,000 for nine."

"Mr. Jackson's offer is the first."

"Never mind him. I'll throw in 1,000 Kickapoo as an inducement to you. Kickapoo is worth about six cents. You will make \$60 by the trade."

Joe, however, declined to buy.

"If I change my mind I'll call on you."

Bolton looked disappointed.

He returned to the charge with other mining stocks, none of them of importance enough for a person to put his money into it unless he was willing to let it remain indefinitely.

After awhile Joe worked the subject around to Little Giant.

"What do you think of that stock?" he asked.

"Tip top. I can get you a few thousand shares. I guess if you want them. They're worth 80 cents, but I'll let you have them for 75."

"I don't want to buy. I just spoke about it, for if I remember rightly this stock was up to \$3 some weeks ago," said Joe.

"Yes, so it was, but that was only a fake price. It never was worth more than a dollar."

"How came it to be quoted at \$3 if it was only worth \$1?"

"Oh, several Goldfield operators worked the rise by wash sales in order to accomplish a scheme they had in view."

"Did they succeed?"

"I really couldn't tell you."

"You do not believe that the rise amounted to anything. That is, you would not have bought the stock at \$3 yourself?"

"I should say not. I'm not quite a fool yet."

"Do you think there is any chance of Little Giant ever going to \$3?"

"I doubt it. Still, the unexpected might happen any time."

Bolton tried again to sell him the 10,000 Tar Flat mining shares at nine cents, with the 1,000 Kickapoo thrown in for

good measure, but Joe wouldn't take them, and the broker had to go away without doing any business with the boy.

That evening Joe called on the Widow Carter and told her what Uriah Bolton had admitted to him about the Little Giant stock.

"That shows he deliberately worked the stock off on you, knowing it was not worth more than \$1 a share, and the fake quotation of \$3 would not hold more than a few days," said the boy. "He is a rank swindler, but unfortunately he cannot be reached by any means that would get you justice. I'd like to catch him in some deal myself, but I'm afraid he's too clever to step into any trap. He traps other people and keeps clear of pitfalls himself."

Several other Curb traders called on Joe with stock they wanted to get rid of, and which nobody seemed to want, but the boy wasn't buying slow moving stuff, and the brokers did not find him as easy as they expected.

Six weeks passed away and Joe hadn't made a cent since he took the half of the office with Miss Ridley.

That fact, however, did not worry him any.

He had \$7,000 stowed away in his safe deposit box, and he knew that summer was a slow time in Wall Street as a rule.

He had sent his mother to the country to spend a couple of months in the farming regions for a good rest, and each of his sisters were slated for a two weeks' vacation in turn with their mother at his expense.

The younger one went first, as there was nothing to stop her, and the others were to go as soon as they were let off from the department store.

On Saturday morning Joe was in his office reading over financial matters and Western papers containing the latest mining news.

It had been a particularly slow week in the Street, and two-thirds of the brokers had not been at their offices at all for fully ten days.

The other third merely dropped in to attend to such business as required their attention, and after passing maybe an hour at one of the exchanges, took a train back to the summer resorts where they were rustinating.

Joe had been down to the Curb Exchange a little while before and found hardly anybody there, and absolutely nothing doing.

Looking over the paper, Joe saw a paragraph referring to the Tar Flat Mining Company.

It mentioned that the company had lately discovered a fresh lode of ore, and was installing new machinery to increase the production.

The paper said that if its present bright prospects were verified, the value of the shares would more than double.

Another Western paper also spoke about Tar Flat mine, and prophesied that it was likely to prove a new Eldorado.

This paper likewise mentioned Little Giant as a mine that was coming to the front, and spoke about the increased demand for the stock, which was now quoted at 85 cents.

What the papers said about Tar Flat mine interested Joe greatly.

He thought it might be a good stock to buy and hold, as it was cheap.

He wondered if Uriah Bolton had sold the 10,000 shares he had offered him at nine cents, and whether Jackson had his 10,000 still knocking around the office.

The only way to find out was to call on the gentlemen.

It was a question whether he would find them at their offices.

He visited Jackson's office first and asked for that broker.

"He hasn't been here since Wednesday," said the cashier.

"Well, he offered me 10,000 shares of Tar Flat mining about six weeks ago for nine cents, though it was quoted at ten, and I called to see if the offer was still open."

"Tar Flat," said the cashier; "I'll look it up."

In a few minutes he said it was ruling at 10 1-2 on the Goldfield market, and he guessed Mr. Jackson wouldn't sell it for nine.

"Could you reach Mr. Jackson by telephone and ask him?" said Joe.

"Oh, yes, he's down at Southampton, Long Island. If you mean business I'll call him up."

"I am ready to buy the stock at nine cents right now."

The cashier said it would take at least ten minutes to get Jackson if he was around the hotel, but if he wasn't he probably could not be got that day.

"I'll be back in about twenty minutes, and you can let me know the result," said Joe, who left the office and made for Uriah Bolton's place.

It happened that Bolton had come to the city that morning to attend a meeting, and he had just reached his office.

"I have come after that Tar Flat stock if you still have it on hand, and will make the same offer."

"What was my offer?"

Joe told him.

"How long ago did I make you that offer?"

"About six weeks."

"I couldn't make the same deal now."

"Why not?"

"Because I can get ten for it."

"All right, good-by," said Joe.

"Hold on. Seeing as I made you such a low offer, I'll let you have it for 9 1-2."

Joe, however, insisted on nine cents, without the Kickapoo thrown in."

He pulled two \$500 bills from his pocket, and the sight of them won Bolton over, and the deal was consummated at nine cents.

"If you want any more, I guess I can get them for you," said the broker.

"I'll let you know."

Joe went back to Jackson's office, and learned that the best that gentleman would do was to take 9 1-2 for the 10,000, so the boy bought them at that figure.

He made inquiries about more of the stock, and on Monday he picked up 10,000 more in several lots at the average price of 10.

Next day he found 5,000 in Jersey City, for which he had to pay 10 1-2, as the Goldfield quotations showed that the stock had risen half a cent.

A week later Tar Flat was up to 15 cents.

Three days afterward it was quoted at 30 cents on the Western exchanges.

Twenty-five cents was bid for it on the curb, but none came out.

Joe had corralled all of it that was East.

A second discovery of rich ore in the mine sent the price booming up to 60.

Before the rise, Uriah Bolton had called several times on Joe to know if he wanted more of the Tar Flat shares.

Joe thought he had enough, but happening to see the rise of the price to 15 cents, he ran around to Bolton's office and offered the old fox 12 cents for 20,000 shares if he guaranteed to deliver them in thirty days.

Bolton took him up as quick as a wink, and then went out to buy the shares.

He supposed he would have no trouble finding that amount, as he had heard that Jackson had 10,000 shares.

He called on Jackson, and learned from that gentleman that he had sold the shares to Joe.

Bolton was taken back at this information.

All he could do now was to look around for what he had engaged to deliver.

While he was doing this unsuccessfully, he discovered that Tar Flat had gone to 15 cents out West.

It looked as if he was stuck for a few hundred dollars, instead of making \$400, as he had calculated on.

Uriah Bolton wasn't in the habit of being stuck himself in a deal.

He was in business to stick other people, and he did not relish having the principle applied to himself.

Then the idea of being done by a mere boy galled him.

He hoped that before the time limit expired the price would drop back to 10 or even lower.

Instead of that the price went up to 60 cents, as we have mentioned.

The papers were now full of the luck which had struck the Tar Flat mine, and as the news was fully confirmed, Mr. Bolton was the maddest man in Wall Street.

If the price remained at 60 cents a few days longer he would be obliged to pay Joe the difference between 12 cents and that price, or \$9,600.

The very idea of such a thing almost broke his heart.

But there was worse coming for him.

On the twenty-ninth day of his agreement a third discovery of gold in the Tar Flat mine sent the price to 75 cents.

That put the foxy broker \$3,000 more to the bad.

CHAPTER XII.

BAITING THE OLD FOX.

That afternoon Joe met Uriah Bolton on the street.

"How do you do, Mr. Bolton?" he said, cheerfully.

The broker glared at him angrily.

"Heard about the latest rise in Tar Flat?" went on Joe.

"Bah! Nothing in it," snarled the trader.

"No? Why, it is officially reported from Goldfield this morning."

"Stuff and nonsense!"

"I think it will go to \$1 in a day or two. Have you the 20,000 shares ready to deliver to me to-morrow?"

"No, I haven't. I'll have to settle with you at 60."

"Sixty!" said Joe. "Why, it's 75 at this moment. Besides, I am not obliged to settle at the market price unless I choose. It is your place to deliver the stock. If you can't do that, I can demand any figure I choose in reason."

"What are you talking about? You can't demand a cent more than the market price," roared Bolton.

"Very well. There are several traders who know I hold 30,000 shares of the stock which I bought at bed-rock figures. I have been offered 65 for a part of it. Now that the price has jumped to 75, I have no doubt I can get 80. As I believe the price will go higher, I am going to offer your option agreement for 90. If anybody takes it at that, they will probably make you pay \$1."

"You have no right to offer it for sale. It is made out to you."

"I know it is, but I can sell it up to three to-morrow."

"Come to my office and I'll settle with you at 75 now."

"No, to-morrow is the date of the agreement."

"I can settle earlier if I choose."

"Not unless I choose to accept your offer."

"You'll take the difference between 12 and 75, won't you?"

"Not to-day."

"Seems to me you are acting like a young Shylock," said the broker, angrily.

"You have never done that, have you?"

"Me? Of course not."

"You didn't charge Mrs. Carter, of Jersey City, \$3 a share for Little Giant when you knew it was only worth \$1 or less, and that \$3 was a fake price for it?"

"What do you mean?"

"Some months ago Mrs. Carter turned over to you for sale 15 shares of a railroad stock worth 98. Instead of following her directions you called on her and suggested that she would do better by accepting 400 shares of Little Giant at \$3, which you said would soon pay regular dividends, and \$300 cash. As she took you for a reputable broker, and as you hold the mortgage on her cottage, she accepted your proposition, and as a consequence she has lost \$800, which she can't afford. Do you call that a square way to treat a lady who trusted you? If you do, I don't, Mr. Bolton. I say you acted like a Shylock."

"How dare you talk to me that way?" sputtered the broker.

"Because you deserve it. That's why it gives me a lot of satisfaction to know that I have caught you very nicely by your own agreement. I dare say it is something of a novelty for you to get caught. It is so unusual. As the case stands, you will have to swallow some of your own medicine. If you hadn't treated Mrs. Carter, who is a friend of mine, so meanly, I would settle with you at 75, but to get square with you I shall hold you right up to my pound of flesh. That is all till to-morrow, Mr. Bolton. Good-morning."

Joe walked off, and Uriah Bolton shook his fist after him.

The boy walked down to the Curb and offered 80 cents for any part of 5,000 shares of Tar Flat.

He didn't want the stock, but he knew no broker had any to offer him.

"Why are you willing to pay 80 for more Tar Flat?" asked a broker he knew. "It is reported that you already have 30,000 shares of it."

"And I hold an option for 20,000 more to be delivered to-morrow if the gentleman can deliver it, which I think is very doubtful."

"Who was fool enough to sell you such an option?" said the surprised trader.

"Uriah Bolton."

"Get out! He's the last man who would do such a thing."

"Don't you believe me?"

"No."

"Would you recognize his signature?"

"Yes."

"Then come to my office and I'll show you the option."

"I'll do it. If you have really caught that old fox in an option deal, it will be the biggest feather you will ever get in your hat, and the boys will all take their hats off to you. It will be the biggest piece of news I could tell around. Nothing would make the brokers feel better than to learn that Uriah Bolton has been caught in one of his own traps."

Joe took the broker to his office and showed him the option.

"Do you want to sell it?" said the broker.

"Not unless he refuses to settle with me for \$1."

"Good for you. Stick him for all you can. It will be a holiday for the boys."

When the broker returned to the Curb he circulated the intelligence about the option deal Uriah Bolton had made with Joe Cook, in which he agreed to deliver 20,000 shares of Tar Flat stock for 12 cents a share.

The traders couldn't believe such a thing, but the broker assured them he had seen the option and recognized the old fox's signature.

"How in thunder did he come to make such a fool of himself?" said one.

"He did it when Tar Flat was selling around ten, and before any one had the idea that the mine was going to develop three new lodes of gold. They boy caught him through pig luck. It's about the only way he could be caught."

The news flew from mouth to mouth like wildfire, and the whole Curb was soon talking about it.

Soon after the Exchange closed, news from Goldfield showed that Tar Flat had gone up to 90.

Several traders rushed over to Joe's office to talk with him about the trapping of Bolton, and to try and buy some of Tar Flat for 85.

Joe wouldn't entertain any offer under \$1, but he finally sold five brokers 3,000 shares each at 90, which gave him a profit of about \$12,000.

Bolton sent a note around to him offering to settle on a basis of 80, but Joe sent him word back that the market price was 90, and would probably be \$1 next day.

If the broker wanted to pay \$1 now, he would close out the option.

He received no reply.

Early advices from Goldfield next morning showed that Tar Flat had opened at 95 bid, \$1 asked.

At noon it was \$1 bid and \$1.10 asked.

The price closed at \$1.05.

Joe walked into Bolton's office at three exactly.

"I'm ready to settled with you, Mr. Bolton," he said. "I'll either take the stock or \$1.05."

"I'll give you neither. You are a minor, and our agreement don't stand in law. If you don't believe it, have your mother sue me. You can't yourself, for you have no standing in court. How does that hit you, you young Shylock?" grinned the old fox, sardonically.

"Tying to welsh, are you?" said the boy, quietly. "Trying to sneak out of an imaginary hole. Who's your lawyer? If he gave you that advice, he's a clever one. I'm not worrying about that option. Your signature is attached to it, and it holds you. I have had legal advice on the subject myself. In dealing with a man like you, I wasn't taking any chances. You know that paper is legal, and you are simply trying to bluff me. Do you refuse to settle with me now at \$1.05? If you do, I know what I'll do."

"What will you do?"

"I know half a dozen brokers who are ready to take the option off my hands at my figure just for the pleasure of getting back at you. Do you think they couldn't collect?"

Uriah Bolton threw up the sponge and offered to settle for \$1.

"I'll settle with you for \$1 provided you give me your check for \$800, made payable to Mrs. Carter. You honestly owe her that money."

Bolton uttered an imprecation.

"I don't owe her a cent."

"Very well, then settle with me at \$1.05."

"Confound you, you are driving me into a corner."

"You made the corner yourself, and you fit there."

"Little Giant is quoted at \$1.25, and it's likely to go higher."

"That makes her stock worth \$500. Make a check out to her for \$700, and you can settle with me for \$1. That will be \$17,600, plus my deposit of \$240."

Bolton made out the two checks.

"There you are. Now hand me that infernal option," he said.

"Get them certified in the morning and send them to my office, then you can have your option."

"Do you mean to say you won't accept my check?"

"Not until it is certified. You might stop payment."

"What do you think I am?" roared Bolton.

"You have the reputation of being the foxiest trader in the Street, and as I am only a boy, I can't afford to take chances with you."

If Bolton had dared he would have thrown Joe out of his office, but he did not dare go to such an extreme.

So the boy carried his point and went back to his own office.

Next forenoon Joe received the two checks certified by the paying teller of Bolton's bank, and gave up the option, on which he made a profit of \$17,600.

He had achieved not only the satisfaction of doing up Uriah Bolton, but he had forced him to do the right thing by the Widow Carter.

When he went home that afternoon he astonished his mother with his story of his coup in Tar Flat mining stock.

"I have cleaned up a profit of \$29,600, and I still have 20,000 shares worth over \$20,000, which only cost me \$1,850. I guess I'm doing pretty well in Wall Street, mother, don't you think?"

"You amaze me, Joe," she answered.

"I consider myself worth \$57,000 at this moment."

Then he told her how he had made over \$17,000 out of Uriah Bolton, and, furthermore, how he had compelled the foxy broker to make restitution to Mrs. Carter, showing her the certified check for \$700.

His mother was still more astonished, and declared he was a wonder.

"That's what the Curb brokers call me," he said. "They say it's the first time in their recollection that Bolton was ever caught so bad. Every one of them is tickled over it, and they raised high jinks with me when I went down to the Curb this afternoon."

After supper Joe called on Mrs. Carter.

The story he told her fairly took her breath away.

When Joe handed her Bolton's check she grabbed him around the neck and kissed him several times in her great joy.

"You must let me pay you for your trouble," she said.

"Not a cent, Mrs. Carter. I'm sufficiently paid in knowing that I have made Mr. Bolton do the square thing by you. I have always had that purpose in my mind, but I didn't know how to get around it. Now luck has helped me do it, and soak the old fox as well to the tune of \$17,600."

"You are the smartest boy in the world," cried the widow, admiringly.

"Hardly the smartest in the world, but smart enough to hold my own in Wall Street, which is satisfaction enough for me."

Then Joe bade her good-night and went home.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

Uriah Bolton learned that the Curb brokers were enjoying the financial doing up he had received from Joe Cook, and it added fuel to his wrath.

He spent many hours during the next few days cogitating how he could get even with the boy who had showed him up before the Street.

He called a particular friend into his office and took counsel with him.

A scheme was hatched by which Bolton hoped to accomplish his purpose.

In a day or two the friend called on Joe and introduced himself as Mr. Hall.

He said he had heard considerable about Joe, and judged he was a pretty smart boy.

"Have you had much experience as a broker?" he asked.

Joe admitted that he had not.

"I suppose you could buy 100 shares of Rock Island Copper for me?"

I could do that all right. Give me your order and a ten per cent. deposit, and I'll have the stock ready for you to-morrow."

"It's selling at 21. I don't want to give over the market price for it. If you can't get it for that, hold off till you see me again."

"All right," said Joe, and he then received his first order to do business for a customer, and the visitor paid him \$210 on account.

Now Rock Island Copper was strong on the market at that time, and though it was ruling at 21, you couldn't buy it under 21 1-2.

Joe tried his best to get 100 shares for 21, but did not succeed, and had to give up until he saw his customer again.

Half an hour after the exchanges had closed for the day Joe was reading at his desk, when a lady dressed in black walked in and asked for him.

"Take a seat, ma'am," said Joe, wondering who his visitor was.

"My name is Mrs. William Green," said the lady, introducing herself.

"Yes, ma'am."

"A gentleman connected with a bank here in Wall Street was telling me what a smart young man you are," she went on, sweetly. "He said you were just starting out in the brokerage business, and that all the brokers were talking about the clever way you had caught one of the shrewdest old traders in the Street in some trade by which you had made a bunch of money. That aroused my curiosity to see you, and as I have a 100-share certificate of stock I want to sell, I thought I would use that as an excuse to call on you."

"Do you wish me to sell the stock for you?"

"Certainly, if you can do it as well as any other broker."

"I guess I can, ma'am. What is the name of the stock? If it is good stock that is in demand, I can sell it, but if it isn't, of course I can only use my best efforts to dispose of it."

"It is Rock Island Copper, and I understand it is in general demand. The gentleman from the bank said I would have no trouble in selling it."

Joe was surprised.

It seemed singular that the very stock he wanted to buy for his first customer, and the exact number of shares that gentleman wanted, should be brought to his office.

If the lady was willing to sell it at the market price he could do business with her right off the reel.

"How much do you want for it?" he asked.

"I want to get the market price."

"That is 21, ma'am, or was, half an hour ago. I'll look at the ticker and see if there has been any change," he said.

The tape showed no recent quotations, so the last sale at 21 stood.

He so informed his visitor.

"Very well, I'll take 21 for it if you can sell it right away. I want to take the 2.45 train for Philadelphia. I am going there to spend a couple of weeks with my sister, and I want to take the money with me."

Joe thought \$2,100 was a lot of cash for the lady to carry around loose with her, but it was not his business.

He was about to say that he had a customer who wanted 100 shares of the stock, when his telephone rang.

He put the receiver to his ear and said "Hello!"

"Is that you, Cook?" said a voice he thought he recognized.

"Yes. Who is this?"

"Dempsey."

That was the name of his particular broker friend.

"Have you had a man in looking for 100 shares of Rock Island Copper?" went on the voice.

"Yes. He left an order and the usual deposit. I wasn't able to get the stock at the exact figure he was willing to pay, but I guess—"

"Don't do any business with him," interrupted Dempsey. "The man is from Uriah Bolton, and there is some kind of game behind it to do you."

"Is that so?" said Joe, in surprise. "How did you learn that?"

"My office boy overheard a part of the plot and told me about it. A lady will call on you later with 100 shares of the same stock for sale which she will offer you at the figure the man told you to pay for it. When she calls, don't buy the stock from her. Offer to take her order and say you will try and sell it. I fancy she will object to that and insist that she wants the cash right away. Tell her that you only buy and sell stock on commission. If she calls, come and see me right away, and we will try and figure out what Bolton's little game is."

"All right," said Joe, hanging up the receiver.

Turning to his desk, he made out a selling order for 100 shares of Rock Island Copper, and asked the lady to sign it.

She removed her glove and did so.

Then Joe said he would offer her stock for sale to some broker and send her a draft for the money if she would give him her Philadelphia address.

At that she hesitated and remarked that she thought Joe could pay her on the spot.

"No, ma'am, I only buy and sell for my customers on commission. When you get the draft you can easily collect it in Philadelphia."

The lady didn't seem to like that idea, and said she would have to try another broker.

"Very well, ma'am, that is your privilege," said Joe, politely.

"If no broker will pay me down, I will come back and give you the order," she said as she got up.

Joe bowed, and she took her departure.

The boy put on his hat and took the stairs down.

The lady was just leaving the building when he reached the ground floor.

He was about to follow her out when he saw Uriah Bolton standing at the entrance.

The lady went up to him and they had a talk together, after which they walked off.

At the corner they were joined by Joe's first customer, the man who gave his name as Hall, and the three stopped and talked.

Then they walked down to Bolton's office.

All that was enough to convince Joe that some trick had been tried on him, but what it could be he could not surmise.

He went on to Dempsey's office, and found that gentleman in.

"The lady called, I suppose?" said Dempsey.

"Yes," and Joe described the interview.

He told how he had followed her and seen her meet Bolton at the main door.

And also how he had seen them meet his other customer at the corner.

"There's some scheme behind it," said the boy, "but I can't imagine what it can be, for everything looks regular. The man Hall left a deposit of \$210, which I will have to return if I don't get him the stock."

"What did he want to pay for it?"

"Twenty-one."

"It can't be bought for that. I tried to get 500 shares for 21 1-2 awhile ago, but 22 was asked. You might find some broker willing to trade with you for 21 7-8, but not lower."

"But if the lady was willing to sell her stock for 21, I can't see where I could have suffered by buying it."

"Apparently not on the surface, but as you have noted the fact that she is evidently acting for Bolton, there's a screw loose somewhere. He wouldn't send anybody to you to sell stock for 21 that was being generally held for 22."

"I could have bought it an hour or so ago for 21 1-2, but as my customer only authorized me to pay 21, I couldn't do it."

"Did you examine the lady's certificate closely?"

"No, I did not. It looked all right."

"The only way I can figure the matter out is that it was a bogus certificate. The object being to get \$2,100 of your good money. When the man called later he would probably have either refused to take it, on the ground that it was no good, or he would have paid you for it, and then later brought it back and said it was a forgery, for which he intended to hold you responsible for unless you settled with him for \$5,000 or \$10,000. Unless you could find the lady and prove you got it from her, he could make a lot of trouble for you," said Dempsey.

"I'll bet that was Bolton's scheme."

"I'm inclined to think it was myself. He's awfully sore on you over the option deal, and would do a good deal to get even with you. As the case stands, you have blocked his game."

"Thanks to your kind tip."

"You can thank my office boy. It was he who passed me the tip."

"Send him over to my office and I'll make it all right with him."

"That isn't necessary. Keep your eyes skinned, for Bolton will try to work some other game on you."

Next day Hall called and asked for his stock.

Rock Island Copper was ruling at 23.

Joe told him that he was unable to get it for 21, and offered him his deposit back.

The man took it and went away.

Shortly after his departure Joe saw a blank envelope on the floor.

Picking it up, he looked into it and saw it held an enclosure. Taking it out he read the following:

"FRIEND HALL: Get in on White Bear mining right away. It is down to ten cents, but a lead has been discovered in the mine which will send it booming to half a dollar in less than a week. Broker Caxton has some of it, and so has Uriah Bolton. Take all they have, and look around for more. Yours truly,
TOM HUGHES."

Joe grinned after reading it.

"I guess that is a fake tip—a plant for me to bite at. Hall dropped that on purpose for me to find. Well, I wasn't born yesterday," said the boy.

He showed the paper later to Dempsey, and that broker said it was a fake, and a mighty raw one.

"Why, everybody knows that White Bear is practically a dead mine," he said. "It's a scheme of Bolton to unload a big block of it on you. Caxton is a friend of his, and is helping him do you."

That day Joe got rid of the rest of his Tar Flat stock at \$1.50, clearing a profit of \$28,000, and raising his capital to \$64,000.

He also got a tip that copper was going to advance quite a bit in a few days, and was told to get in on Caledonia Copper.

That stock was selling for \$8.50 a share, and he was assured that it would go to \$15, if not higher, while the higher priced copper stocks would also participate in a general rise.

It immediately occurred to him to see if he could buy an option on Caledonia from Bolton's friend Caxton, who seemed to be willing to take his scalp.

He hardy thought Caxton would bite, but he decided to try him.

So he called on that gentleman.

"How do you do, Mr. Caxton? My name is Cook," said Joe.

"Glad to know you," cried Caxton, grabbing him by the hand, as if he were an old friend. "What can I do for you?"

"Got any Caledonia Copper?"

"Not a share," said Caxton, disappointed, for he thought Joe had come looking for White Bear.

"Want to sell me an option on 5,000 shares, good for 15 days?"

Caxton looked at him suspiciously.

"I'll get you 5,000 shares as close to the market as I can. Let me see. It is going for \$8.50. You'll probably have to give \$8.60, or a little higher."

"I could get all I want for \$8.60 if I had the cash to pay for it, but I won't have it for two weeks, that's why I want to buy an option."

"What will you give for the call on 5,000 within two weeks?"

"I'll give \$9.25."

"If you say \$10, I'll talk to you."

"That's too high. I'm not looking for it to go out of sight." Caxton, however, wouldn't come down, and Joe finally agreed to stand for that figure on a five per cent. deposit of the current price, or \$2,125.

The deal was made, and Joe put up the money.

Caxton called on Bolton and told him about the option he had sold the boy.

"I'll clear \$5,000 or \$6,000 out of it," he said, even if the price goes up and the boy makes something himself; "but as Caledonia hasn't sold higher than \$10 in a year, I don't see where he is coming in."

Bolton grinned sardonically.

"Have you bought the shares yet?" he asked.

"No. I guess there is no rush about it."

"That so? Well, that boy is sharper than a razor. You know how he done me, and no one has ever considered me easy. I wouldn't sell him another option if I saw \$50,000 profit in it, for he wouldn't offer to buy it unless he had a sure thing up his sleeve. I just bought 1,000 Caledonia for a customer, and I found trouble getting it. It cost me 9. If you want to save your bacon get out right away and protect yourself."

Caxton judged that Bolton's advice was good, and he started out to get the 5,000 shares he had engaged to deliver at \$10. He got 1,000 at \$9.

He had trouble in securing another 1,000, and to pay \$9.10 for it.

He got no more that day, but the next he picked up 2,000 at \$9.50, and he had to pay \$10 for the last 1,000.

He was lucky as it was, for the price went right up to \$18 inside of ten days, when Joe called on him to deliver.

This he did, and he only made \$2,500 instead of the \$6,000 he had counted on.

Joe immediately offered the 5,000 on the market in small lots, and made a profit of \$40,000, raising his capital to a little over \$100,000.

The boy's luck did not end there, but we have no space to follow his later deals.

He gradually became a well-known operator on the Curb, and was generally referred to as the boy behind the deals.

Next week's issue will contain "THROWN ON THE WORLD; OR, STARTING BUSINESS WITH A DOLLAR."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Twenty years ago a girl of Pittsburgh promised to await the return of Joseph Hart, her lover, who, after having been refused the consent of her father because he was not rich, decided to go West. Hart kept working for twenty years and became rich. He returned to Pittsburgh with but one thought—to marry his childhood sweetheart. He visited the Point district, where the two had lived, and learned the girl had married just one year after he left home.

Twenty dollar gold pieces amounting to \$1,400 were found in Michigan City, Ind., by Mrs. William McCorkle of McCool, Ind. They had been buried under a tree across from his home eight years ago by her father, Nathaniel Marshall, a carpenter. The family dispersed after their home was burned eight years ago, and Marshall went to live with his son in Iowa. Just before Marshall died he told his son of burying the gold, but the young man did not credit the story. When he met Mrs. McCorkle at a reunion he told of their father's story.

A test of the armor to be used in the hull of Battleship No. 39, now building at the New York Navy Yard, will be made off Norfolk to determine the effect of a torpedo fired against the ship, which in this instance will be represented by a caisson 60 feet long and 25 feet wide, made of the armor to be used for the battleship. The torpedo boat Morris will fire a Whitehead torpedo with the newest designed war head, containing 300 pounds of gun-cotton, against the caisson. Thus experts will determine whether the new battleship is proof against torpedo attacks.

The wireless telegraph station at Punta Arenas, on the Straits of Magellan, is expected to be in full operation early this year. It will be a station of 100 kilowatts, comprising seven tubular steel masts 269 feet high, and costing over \$150,000. A provisional installation on two of the masts has already established communication with the station in the Falkland Islands and with vessels passing through Magellan Straits. A secondary station will be installed at the Evangelistas Lighthouse, at the Pacific entrance to the straits. Navigation through the straits will be greatly facilitated by the new stations.

An egg-laying competition in England has brought to light the interesting fact that all the champion layers are white hens. A scientific poultry breeder has come to the conclusion that there is some peculiar virtue in white feathers. He noticed that in a mixed lot of hens the whites went to roost last; they took more exercise and were less affected by bad weather. This English competition suggests that hens capable of laying 250 eggs a year are more likely to come from the white Wyandottes or white Leghorns than from any other variety, but what the relation may be no one knows.

A Bombay correspondent, writing of the burial customs of the Parsees, says: "The approach of that transition we call death is a signal for the relatives to leave the presence of the dying one, the priest alone remaining to whisper Zend-Avesta precepts into his ear. He in turn passes out of the room and admits a dog, who is trained to gaze steadily into the face of the dying one. A dog is accounted the only living creature that can terrorize the evil spirits, so the 'sas-did,' or 'dog stare,' is the last sight the Parsee has on earth. No human shadow must intervene; otherwise the virtue of the dog's gaze is annulled."

In the Zoological Gardens in London they have just finished building a series of concrete hills and terraces upon which wild animals will roam at large under conditions as nearly natural as possible. These hills and terraces have been painted with a mixture of oatmeal mush and bonemeal, the object being to add phosphate to the lime of the concrete, phosphates being essential to the growth of moss and lichens. It is believed that this coating will capture the spores of mosses and lichens and enable them to grow, thus making the surface of the rocks green and more natural in appearance than the bare concrete.

The milch cows in the United States at the present time are worth more than \$1,000,000,000, the horses are worth more than \$2,000,000,000, while the value of the meat animals on American farms is more than \$1,900,000,000. These are some of the interesting figures included in a bulletin just issued by the Department of Agriculture, with reference to the supply of live stock of specified classes on farms in the United States on January 1. These estimates are based upon reports and estimates submitted by twenty-two special field agents of the Department of Agriculture, 1,867 county correspondents, 15,542 town and 1,782 special live stock correspondents of the department in all parts of the country.

Louis Sockalexis, a Penobscot Indian, who won fame as a ball player, dropped dead of heart disease while working in a logging camp, at Burlington, Me. His body was removed to his home in Old Town. Sockalexis was born forty-one years ago. His paternal grandfather was at one time governor of the Penobscots, and the family was prominent in the affairs of the tribe. Louis was an uncle of Andrew Sockalexis, the marathon runner. Like his nephew, Louis Sockalexis was a natural athlete and was able to run 100 yards in ten seconds when at his best. He became known as a baseball player in 1895-6, when he played center field on the Holy Cross team, his work attracting the attention of the big-league scouts. In 1897 Sockalexis was an outfielder for Cleveland in the National League. Afterward he played on teams in the minor leagues of New England. In recent seasons he had officiated as umpire in local leagues.

CHEEK AND CHANCE

—OR—

TRAVELING ON HIS WITS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIX. (Continued.)

It was singular that Darius Smith had dropped so unexpectedly out of sight. It was inexplicable to Andy.

"Perhaps he is lying low and waiting his time," reflected the young outcast. "Well, I can wait as long as he can."

Andy was not one to remain long idle. He had all plans made to leave at once for Molunkus.

But a heavy rain came on which lasted several days. Great freshets were the result and Andy knew that it would be folly for him to try to reach Molunkus at a time when the corduroy roads were under water.

At this juncture, also, a lucrative position was offered Andy. A mercantile house of Portland advertised for a traveling salesman. The line was general furnishing goods. As the salary was good and Andy had nothing else to do, he applied for and obtained the situation. In a few days he was traveling on the road, going from one Maine town to another in flying trips.

Thus Andy did not remain idle, nor was his new calling devoid of exciting features. He had been a month on the road when a thrilling adventure befell him.

He had just sold a bill of goods to a merchant in Belfast. Andy was a smart salesman. He was lively and keen, and had the right amount of cheek to succeed.

He was on his way to catch a train. The hour was six in the evening. There were many people on the street, and Andy found it difficult to force his way through the crowd.

But he reached the station, and was entering the waiting-room when a man came out. At sight of Andy he stopped short and stared. But the young drummer was in a hurry to get his train, and did not notice the other.

He was tall and flashily dressed. He wore a long imperial and mustache, which were snow white, as was also his hair. Yet he was not an old man.

He turned and entered the station again. As Andy bought his ticket he stood right behind him.

"A ticket for Burnham, please," said Andy.

"All right, sir!"

The ticket agent stamped the pasteboard and handed it to him. Andy started rapidly away. Then the white-haired man stepped up with a queer glitter in his eyes and bought a ticket for the same town.

Burnham was a small junction a few miles above, where Andy could change cars for Augusta. But there were a few merchants there to whom he expected to sell a bill of goods. He intended to put up there for the night.

So as Andy boarded the train, the white-haired man non-

chalantly did the same. Andy sank into a seat. The white-haired man sat down in the seat in front of him and began to consult assiduously a Pathfinder.

After some energetic efforts he wheeled around and confronted Andy. The train was now in motion.

"Beg pardon!" he said, brusquely. "But you're a traveling man, I know."

Andy nodded.

"I am!"

"How do you get to Newport?"

"Newport?" repeated Andy. "Change cars at Burnham."

"Ah, acquainted up that way, are you?"

"I have been there."

"Humph! don't know a farmer and storekeeper. Ladd, Sam Ladd, I think his name is. Do you?"

"I don't recall it," replied Andy. "But you ought to find him. Newport is not a large place, and everybody knows most everybody else."

"Of course! Thanks! How d'ye find trade, anyway?"

"Fair to middling," replied Andy, in the careless *sang froid* of the drummer.

"From New York, I take it?"

"No, Portland!"

"The dickens! Portland is a smart town. I find half the Maine merchants buy of wholesalers there, when New York houses undersell every time. Matter of loyalty or prejudice?"

"I couldn't say," replied Andy, idly, as he unfolded a newspaper.

But the white-haired salesman was determined to keep up the conversation. He thrust forward a card:

"R. PETER SMYTHE,
Representing Ochs, Sachs & Company,
Dealers in Leather Goods,
Broadway, New York."

Andy took the pasteboard and returned a card of his own. R. Peter Smythe then grew very talkative. In spite of Andy's yawns and idle interest Smythe persisted. When the train rolled into Burnham, Smythe exclaimed:

"I believe I'll lay over here one night, too. Don't know the hotel."

"I'll show you," said Andy, curtly.

So the two drummers trudged up the little street and entered the hotel office. The clerk gazed at them with a sweeping know-it-all way, and mentally reflected:

"Two traveling men. Social chaps, it's likely. Maybe they'll be bucking the tiger before morning. I'll give 'em connecting rooms. Front!" Bang! bang! went the bell. "Take these gents up to 56 and 57. Supper is ready when you want it."

Andy paid little heed to the numbers of the rooms, but Smythe's eyes glittered and he gave the clerk an approving wink. It was not the first time commercial travelers had spent the night at poker in that hotel.

Andy noted in a forgetful way that Smythe had been given the room next to his. Then he fell to and proceeded to wash and brush up for supper.

He went down into the office long before Smythe left his room. It did not occur to him to call his commercial friend, but went to supper alone. This struck the clerk as rather queer.

"That's odd," he muttered. "Well, if there's anything queerer under the sun than the American drummer I'd like to know what it is."

He locked the cash drawer, took a cigar from the case, bit off the end and lit the weed.

"Perhaps they don't want to be together much," he soliloquized. "Ten to one they'll be stacking cards till four o'clock in the morning. Well, that's none of my biz. Front, you're wanted in 27."

Had the smart clerk been able to witness a scene being enacted at that moment in rooms 56 and 57 he would have drawn even queerer conclusions, with regard to the white-haired drummer at least.

Andy had not been long absent from his room when the connecting door with 57 began to vibrate. The bolt was being worked back slowly, and presently the door swung open. Mr. R. Peter Smythe stepped boldly into room No. 56.

CHAPTER XX.

SMYTHE'S LITTLE GAME.

The bolt which fastened the door, as luck would have it, was on Smythe's side. He entered Andy's room and looked about in a catlike way.

He did not remain long. He again examined the door, and then went back and noiselessly drew the lock.

When Andy came out from supper, R. Peter Smythe went in. They exchanged nods, but that was all.

Andy went into the writing room and wrote a few letters. By this time it was ten o'clock and he decided to retire.

As he went up the stairs he saw R. Peter Smythe glance up at him from the lobby. He had a cigar and nodded pleasantly through the wreaths of smoke.

Andy was tired and quickly tumbled into bed. In a few moments he was sound asleep.

It was an hour later when a key clicked in the door of the next room. Mr. R. Peter Smythe came in and made a pretense of disrobing and retiring.

But he only removed his coat and shoes. From his rear pocket he drew a long, keen-bladed knife.

This he placed between his teeth. He turned the flame

of the lamp down and crept silently to the connecting door. Placing his ear to the keyhole, he listened.

The regular respiration told him that his victim was sleeping. Slowly and noiselessly he drew back the bolt.

The door swung silently back. Then he paused on the threshold.

Assured that Andy was sleeping soundly, he crept to the wardrobe. In a few moments he had possessed himself of the sleeping man's clothes. With these he returned to his own room.

He searched them thoroughly, even examining the linings. He read carefully every scrap of paper. But keen disappointment was marked in his face.

That which he sought was not there. A fiendish expression came over his face. He reached up and tore his collar loose, exposing his throat.

Then he gripped the knife in his right hand and started for the connecting door again. But half way there he paused.

The regular respiration of the sleeper in the next room had ceased. He was stirring in his bed.

For a moment Mr. R. Peter Smythe looked about him in a hunted way. Then his features hardened and he felt the blade of the knife. He made a silent move toward the door.

He saw the form of the sleeping man on the bed. He had simply turned over in his sleep it seemed. At once Smythe drew a deep breath as of relief.

Then he crept noiselessly to the bedside. The knife blade was clenched in his teeth. He bent slowly, serpent-like, over the sleeper.

Slowly and softly he pulled down the coverlid from Andy's throat. His eyes glistened.

There, against the white flesh, he saw a silken cord, and attached to it a pouch. It contained the will of Dr. Markham and his directions for locating the buried treasure.

But just at that instant, as the robber's hand stole toward the coveted treasure, a strange thing happened. He saw that one arm of the sleeper was crooked under the pillow, and up into his face stared the cold muzzle of a pistol. A chill ran over him. Then he saw that the supposed sleeper's eyes were wide open and fixed scornfully upon him.

"Drop that knife or you die!"

The command came short and stern. There was an instinctive move on Smythe's part to grip the knife hilt with one hand. Had he succeeded a tragedy might have been enacted. But the revolver clicked and Andy said coolly:

"Hands down!"

An oath rolled from Smythe's lips. He released the grip of his teeth on the knife blade and it dropped upon the coverlid. Then Andy rose in bed, still keeping the villain covered.

"Pretty smart, weren't you, Mr. Smythe or Smith," said Andy, coolly. "Your game is spoiled, though. I ought to kill you, but I shan't. I mean, however, to see that you will trouble me no more."

Andy touched the electric button which communicated with the hotel office. A bell was heard below.

Presently the tramp of feet was heard in the corridor and a tap on the door.

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

GREAT CHECKER-PLAYING.

Pitted against thirty-nine checker players at one time, William Bowles, of Farmington, Iowa, won forty-nine games, draw ten, and lost six out of a total of sixty-three games played within two hours. He had offered to meet all comers in simultaneous competition in the contest staged at the Central Y. M. C. A. Two hundred spectators freely offered suggestions to Bowles' opponents, but not to him. Bowles made the rounds of the thirty-nine boards in an average of thirteen minutes. He was defeated in two out of three games by M. Goeld, of St. Louis. Others who won one game each from Bowles were: Fred Gidcomb, of Mount Carmel, Ill.; L. Troxler, of Springfield, Mo.; William Layton, and M. Alterkruse, of St. Louis.

MAKE WORLD'S RECORD.

Scoring 999 out of a possible 1,000, a new world's record, the Warren, Pa., rifle team, the present title holders, won the second national interclub championship, not a defeat having been registered against the team in the thirteen-week match. The shoot, which was held under the auspices of the National Rifle Association, was concluded with the scores made public the other day of the last week's competition.

The District of Columbia team took second place, with eleven victories and two defeats; Cleveland third, ten victories and three defeats.

In the final match with Cleveland the Warren team put 99 out of 100 shots into a bull's eye the size of a 10-cent piece at a distance of 75 feet, .22 calibre rifles being used.

Cleveland's score was 998, equalling the performance that gave that team a new world's record last week. In Class B the first honors go to King's Mills, O., with thirteen straight victories. Boston, Stillwater, Minn., and Walden, Colo., tied for second place, each with eleven wins and two defeats.

The fifty men making the highest percentage in these matches and in the national individual gallery match will be selected to represent the United States in the international small bore match of 1914.

TO LEAP FROM PLANE 3,000 FEET UP IN AIR.

Since the successful use of the aeroplane gun army aviators have wondered what would happen to them if a shot should plough through a machine while they were in flight. Haldeman Figyelmessy, the Hungarian aviator, who obtained his license to fly in Los Angeles, intends to find out.

He said that he would soar to a height of 3,000 feet over the lower bay shortly and jump from a machine with a "safety pack," an aerial life preserver on the order of the parachute, which can easily be attached to any machine.

Figyelmessy is a graduate of Zurich University, the

University of Geneva and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has a biplane at the aviation grounds at Oakwood Heights, S. I., which he will use. He made a short flight there recently, but came back to earth with the machine.

He volunteered that half of his interest in his proposed death-daring jump was "for the excitement of it." After he jumps the machine will be left to take care of itself. If it dives into Davy Jones's locker he says he will be consoled by the fact that it has served the cause of aeronautical science.

Leo Stevens is arranging the experiment and intends to invite officers of the army to witness it.

PROF. MULLER SOLVES RECORDS WRITTEN BY ISRAEL'S FOE IN 1350 B. C.

Another link has been added to the chain of incontrovertible facts of ancient Egyptian history by Professor Max Muller, Egyptologist at the University of Pennsylvania, who announced his translation of the hieroglyphics inscribed on the twelve ton sphinx in the court yard of the university's museum.

Confirmation of the historical theory regarding Rameses II., the oppressor of the Israelites and conqueror of the Hittites, that his successor was Menepkah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, is given by the translation of Professor Muller. Rameses II. ruled about 1350 B. C.

Professor Muller says that Rameses II. was in the habit of putting his signature on the works of art of his predecessors, but that this sphinx was undoubtedly his own. Menepkah, son of Rameses, followed his sire's example, and scratched his own name on that sire's sphinx, where it may now be read for the edification of historians.

The inscription on the front of the sphinx is thus translated by Professor Fuller:

"This is Rameses H., the occupant of the palace of the God Horus, the strong bull, who loves truth. Rameses, the master of two countries, the life giver beloved by the Goddess Buto, the mistress of Lower Egypt."

That Rameses was beloved by Buto, a mistress, is something new in the way of discovery. Professor Muller says Rameses was known to have married his daughter, but that his mistress's name was Buto, has never been known before.

Menepkah's name is engraved on both shoulders of the sphinx. The inscription says:

"Menepkah, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, was beloved by Amon, the soul of the Sun God. Menepkah was satisfied over the truth."

The name of Rameses is inscribed on the sides just below the flanks of the lion's body. The sphinx was discovered near a temple at ancient Memphis by Professor Flinders Petrie, the famous archaeologist. The body was buried, the head alone being exposed to the winds and sands of the desert. On this account the body is in almost perfect condition, but the face is badly corroded.

TEN-DAY ISLAND

OR,

THE SECRET OF OLD 33

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER IX (Continued).

"Ah!" said Susie. "Well?"

"What's the matter?" asked John Jacks, uneasily.

"I'm afraid you are going to be disappointed," said Susie. "I don't want to discourage you, John Jacks, but the sea has washed away a lot of Ten Day Island, and it is still at it. To the best of my recollection there is no land thirty feet out from the big pine tree."

"That's a bad job."

"It certainly is. Fifty years is a long time. Smugglers have been coming and going on Ten Day Island for many years. It wouldn't surprise me a bit if some of them had found the treasure."

This was certainly not very encouraging.

John Jacks made no answer, but kept his eyes fixed upon the island, thinking his own thoughts, wondering if the wealth of the Seven Brothers was to come his way or not, while Joe pulled away at the oars.

Now, if Joe was not a fast rower he was certainly a steady one, and in due time the boat rounded up in the cove.

It was a dreary scene. Just a long, low strip of sand, with a dozen or more huge pines standing here and there.

The big pine at the head of the cove was, as Susie had intimated, not more than ten feet back from the water.

To the south there was no land for over two hundred feet.

John Jack's heart sank as he pulled the boat up out of the water, for he saw only too plainly that the whole contour of the island must have changed since his grandfather's time.

The place where the treasure was supposed to be buried was now under the sea.

"I reckon you will have to give it up, John Jacks," said Susie. "Your grandfather's treasure is gone long ago."

"Not all gone," was the reply; but when Susie asked him what he meant by that, he only laughed and began walking along the shore.

"I may as well go over and see if there is anything for me," said Susie. "More than likely there is. I was coming over here in a few days, anyhow."

"Where do your goods come from mostly?" asked John Jacks.

"Now that's telling," laughed Susie, "and I don't tell my business. I shall be caught some day, I suppose, and see the inside of Waretown jail. Don't look so horrified, John Jacks. I know very well that smuggling isn't right,

but you must remember I've been brought up to the business. I've been at it all my life, and my father before me."

"Was your father never caught?"

"Yes, once. He got two years for it. Never mind about that. Let's talk about something else."

They walked on to the middle of the island, where Susie paused between two pine trees.

There was nothing but sand here, but putting her hand into a hollow in the trunk of one of the pines, Susie drew out a small scoop shovel, and immediately began shovelling away the sand, revealing an old wooden trap-door beneath.

"This is my storehouse," she said. "Catch hold of that ring, John Jacks, and pull up the lid, and we will soon know whether we have got a load to take back with us or not."

John Jacks obeyed.

There was a large open space underneath the trap-door, built up with boards to prevent the sand from falling in, and a ladder led down to it.

Sure enough, there were smuggled goods in the vault.

A number of rubber bags lay on the floor, which Susie said contained cigars, and several boxes besides.

"I've got to go over this stuff," said Susie, promptly. "This is my treasure, John Jacks. Business first. I've got work to do here."

"While you are working I'm going to take a swim down at the cove," replied John Jacks. "Come along, Joe. I'm just dying to jump into that water, and I know you are, too."

Joe was willing enough, of course, and the boys were soon stripped, and, plunging into the clear still water of the cove, began swimming about.

Joe was a pretty good swimmer, but John Jacks showed himself a perfect expert.

"My stars, Johnny! I wish I could swim like you!" cried Joe, admiringly, as John Jacks came sweeping back to him with bold overhand strokes.

"All practice," said John Jacks. "Here goes for the bottom, Joe!"

He leaped up and went head under like a flash, going straight down to the bottom.

Joe waited breathlessly, for he was gone so long that the boy began to feel afraid.

Suddenly John Jacks rose to the surface.

"Oh, look here, Joe!" he cried, holding up something between his thumb and finger.

"Money!" shouted Joe.

And so it was.

John Jacks held in his hand a large, thick gold coin, bigger than a silver dollar.

"There are lots more down there!" he cried. "Lots and lots of them, Joe! I've found the treasure, as sure as fate!"

CHAPTER X.

THE CHEST AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BAY.

When Susie Tyson came over to the cove after finishing her work in the secret vault, she found John Jacks and Joe sitting on the bank examining a handful of gold pieces—great thick coins, which looked as though they might be as old as the hills.

"Where on earth did you get them, boys?" she exclaimed. "Have you found the treasure?"

"That's what we have," replied John Jacks, "so much of it, anyhow. Don't you see?"

"But where did you get them?" demanded Susie, full of interest.

Joe pointed to the bay. "John Jacks fished them up out there," he replied.

"That's what I did," added John Jacks. "I found them sticking in the sand, and there's more down there—lots more!"

"Then it's all true," said Susie, excitedly. "Well, well! I didn't more than half believe in the existence of the treasure, but this is proof positive. Still, if you have got to dive for it, how long is it going to take to get it all up?"

"That's the point that's puzzling me," said John Jacks; "but I'm going to find some way of doing it, and don't you forget it, Susie. This is a very important matter."

"I should say it was! If there is a million dollars down there in the bay we rather want it. Have you any idea on the subject, John Jacks?"

"Of course I haven't any yet. I haven't had time to think about it, but if I had thought an hour I don't know what a fellow could do except to keep diving till he got it all."

"How many weeks would that take?"

"How many months, you had better ask. What I saw lying on top of the sand was only a hundred coins or so; all the rest are buried, and there's got to be digging done before we can get at them."

"Yes, and what about a lot of it being washed away?"

"You think of everything," said John Jacks. "I see you haven't much hope that we shall ever succeed in recovering much of it."

"That's just what I think," said Joe. "I don't believe we will never get any of it except what's on the surface."

"Same here," said Susie. "The main part of the treasure is as much beyond your reach as though it was out in the middle of the ocean, as far as I can see."

"There you are," cried John Jacks. "I expected you

would say that, Susie; but in spite of it all I think I see a possible way of getting our hands on the sunken treasure. You can tell me if I am right."

"I?" said Susie. "What do I know about it?"

"Lots. You know Waretton and I don't. Is there such a man as a diver there?"

"I believe there is. There's a wrecker who does some diving about sunken vessels. There are often wrecks over in the bay, but if you let him know about it, you will have all Waretton over here at Ten Day Island. He's a rough fellow, and none too honest. John Jacks, I don't believe your plan will work."

"You haven't heard my plan yet, Susie, so how can you judge?"

"Well, that's so, too. Go ahead, and tell it."

"I thought perhaps you could buy an old diver's suit from him, with the pump and all complete. He must have more than one."

"Why, it's possible; but wouldn't he suspect? They cost an awful lot of money, too."

"You mustn't let him suspect. I suppose one of your customers might want such a thing, and might give you the order to buy it for him. As for the money, there is more than a hundred dollars right here in my hand; that ought to pay for the rig, I should say."

"I'll try it," said Susie, "but this money is old, and as soon as he sees it he will suspect."

"Isn't there a bank in Waretton?"

"There is."

"Well, take it there and have it changed."

"I should say it was you who think of everything, John Jacks!" exclaimed Susie. "Well, I don't mind trying it. Of course you will have to stay here till I can attend to the matter, and it may take several days."

"We'll have to stay here anyhow," replied John Jacks. "I haven't the slightest idea of leaving Ten Day Island yet a while."

They discussed the matter further, and it was finally decided that Susie should make the attempt to purchase the diving outfit.

Until this could be had little or nothing could be done toward recovering the sunken treasure, which undoubtedly existed in reality beneath the waves, and not altogether in the imagination of Old 33.

As the tide was now on the turn and would soon be running in, Susie prepared to return to her hut with the smuggled goods.

John Jacks and Joe helped her load the cases into the boat.

It seemed a tremendous load for a young girl to pull for so long a distance, but Susie only laughed when John Jacks said as much.

"Nonsense!" she exclaimed. "Why, my muscles are like iron. Don't you let that fret you. No, Joe, you can't go back with me. I don't want to take the chances of having an escaped convict found in my house. That would spoil my business forever, and like enough put me in jail into the bargain. Leave me alone to manage my own affairs."

(To be continued)

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Bones of men of a prehistoric race, found in the bank of a ravine on the farm of Stephen Cunningham, near Rulo, Nebraska, have been sent to the State University, where professors will examine them. L. C. Edwards, of Falls City, exhumed several skeletons and skulls on the Cunningham farm. The skeletons were found with their heads to the east, embedded in a formation of clay. A string of white shells was around the neck of each. The bones are said to have been those of the men who existed centuries ago and the university will endeavor to ascertain their period.

There is a man in Paris who has a novel way of eking out the small salary he gets as a bank clerk. At night he strolls through the quiet streets of the suburbs, carefully inspecting the closed villas and houses. Every now and then he imitates a dog's bark, yelping and growling in a realistic manner. If there is no canine response he continues his walk, repeating his yelps in front of other houses. When an answering bark replies to his he jots down the address of the house in a note book. The next day a city official calls at these houses reported by the night stroller to collect the probably unpaid dog tax.

Mustard is one of the most ancient of medicines. Pythagoras, who flourished between five and six hundred years before Christ, mentions it. Hippocrates, who was born in 460 B. C., employed it. Pliny the Elder, writ-

ing in 77 A. D., describes three different kinds of mustard and says the seeds were imported to Italy from Egypt originally. The Romans used it as a stimulant after a cold bath; they mixed mustard oil and olive oil in equal parts and used this as a liniment for stiffness of the muscles. They knew the virtues of mustard poultices and of mustard as an emetic. As a remedy for the stings of scorpions and serpents, they pounded it, mixed it with vinegar and applied it to the wound. They also made a drink out of it, fermenting the seed in a fiery spirit. The liquor thus produced they called mustum-ardens, which means burning wine. The word mustard is probably derived from this.

For a number of years the Philippine government has been sending young Filipino men and women to the United States to receive a collegiate education with a view to appointment to higher positions in the government service. Up to date 211 of these "pensionados," as they are called, have been sent over, and a large number of these have been appointed to office on graduation. Hereafter a different policy is to be followed, as the islands now have a university of their own, where natives may receive thorough training in all undergraduate subjects. Accordingly, pensionados will only be designated for post-graduate study in the United States. The Philippine legislature, at its last session, provided fifteen fellowships for advanced work at American institutions.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

Without a guard, Al Fellows, a Cleveland burglar serving a three-year sentence in the Ohio Penitentiary, was permitted by Warden P. E. Thomas to go to Galion to attend the funeral of his father. He returned to prison that night.

The canal system in China is the most extensive in the world with the possible exception of Holland. Wherever the lay of the land permits, the thrifty Chinaman has made a canal. Thus he is enabled to carry the products of his labor to market with the minimum expense.

The oil-burning freighter Santa Cruz arrived at San Francisco recently from New York with what Captain A. Watson said was a new record for the passage via the Straits of Magellan. The distance is approximately 13,000 miles and the time consumed was 47 days and 4 hours.

The police of Newcastle, Ind., will be provided with a camera and hereafter all vagrants and transient prisoners will be photographed and a record kept of their visit to Newcastle. The City Council has made an appropriation for the purchase of the photographer's outfit. The Chief of Police may ask the appointment of a photographer to the department.

J. Crabb, a saddler of Bridge street, Haverfordwest, England, has died from a mysterious and very rare form of disease known as "wooden tongue." The disease has been known to occur occasionally among horses, but it is said that only one or two cases are on record of a human being having been affected. It is surmised that Mr. Crabb had been handling some harness which had been used for a horse suffering from the disease.

In Santa Rosa, Cal., is a Baptist church building, the product of a single giant redwood tree which grew in the neighborhood of Guerneville, a few miles distant from where it now stands, says a writer in the Christian Herald. Not only is the main structure built from the one tree, but the interior finishings—except the floor, which is of pine—beams, pulpit and seatings are of the same wood,

not a particle of plaster or other similar material being used in this remarkable building. The tree when sawed yielded 78,000 feet of lumber, and after the building was finished in every particular, enough material was left to manufacture several thousand shingles, besides a quantity of scantlings, joists and other dimension stuff. So carefully were the details planned, and so skilfully was the framework put together, that the builders of this one-tree church declared it might be as enduring as the old Saxon churches of England built centuries ago out of native timber and still in use. It is Gothic in style, finished with massive buttresses outside and heavy beams inside. A tower seventy feet high was built on the southwest corner, but it came down at the time of the great earthquake in 1906.

JOKES AND JESTS.

"Please don't bother to see me to the door," pleaded the departing visitor. "Really, it's no bother at all," the hostess assured her. "It is a pleasure."

A school-teacher in London received the following letter from the father of one of her pupils: "Dear Teacher: Please excuse Fritz from staying home. He had the measles to oblige his father."

"You ate all your own cake and Mabel's too, Tommie?" said the mother. "Yes'm," replied Tommie. "You'll be sick, child." "Well, mother, you see if anybody was going to be sick I didn't want it to be Mabel."

"How old is your little brother?" inquired Willie. "He's a year old," replied Tommy. "Huh! I've got a dog a year old, and he can walk twice as well as your brother." "That's nothing. Your dog's got twice as many legs."

The old gentleman looked Perley in the eye. "Can you support my daughter in the style to which she is accustomed?" he demanded. "No, Colonel, I can't," replied Perley, "but let me ask you, sir, could you have done so at my age?"

An eminent authority on inebriety, on being asked to decide the question, "When is a soldier drunk?" declared that an enlisted man is intoxicated if he staggers slightly in his walk; but if an officer, while lying on the floor, can hold on without falling off, he is sober.

"Now, children," said the teacher, holding up a carrot, "there is a loud-voiced, obstinate domestic animal that dearly loves this vegetable. Can any of you tell me what that animal is?" Little Honora raised her hand. "I know, teacher," she cried, "it's pa; he's crazy about carrots."

An inquisitive young gentleman in Odessa, Mo., met this advertisement in a local paper: "Young man, some woman dearly loves you. Would you know who she is? Send ten cents to Occult Diviner. Address as below, and learn her name." He sent the money, and received this answer: "Your mother."

THE BEAR HUNTERS.

By Paul Braddon.

Crack! Crack! the report of two rifles rang out in the wild woods along the upper Missouri.

The moon was still in the sky above Bear's Paw Mountain in the north. But the night luminary would soon sink behind the range, and then the night promised to become quite gloomy.

Jack Benton and Dan Cook, the hunters and trappers attached to Fort Benton, had been out just four days, hunting and trapping along the river, and they had been fairly successful. The two veterans of the northwest were on their way back to a little camp they had made in the dense thicket near the river, where they hoped the redskins would not discover them, when the two shots sounded simultaneously nearby.

"Injuns!"

In the same breath almost Jack and Dan uttered the exclamation. They knew the Sioux were on the warpath, and discovery by the savages they were well aware meant almost certain death.

As by a common impulse the two trappers dropped down in a thicket they were traversing.

They presently heard a chorus of wild yells at no great distance. The intonations of those Indians' voices were full of triumph.

The two trappers looked at each other and grasped their rifles determinedly.

"Let's scout up toward the reds. You know our boat, all fitted up with the big pine torches for night deer-stalking on the river, lays in the sedges not far up the stream near our hidden camp, and maybe we kin make the boat all right if we should have to run a race for our lives with the reds," said Jack.

"Come along, then."

Dan Cook crept away in the direction whence the yells of the Indians had sounded, trailing his long rifle behind him, and his companion came after him.

Ere long they came to an opening in the woods, and then, peering through the bushes, they beheld a thrilling sight.

A score of painted Sioux warriors were dancing about a white man, who lay bound hand and foot on the ground.

And Jack instantly recognized him.

"Father Felix, the old French trader, and the father of Mura, my promised bride!" uttered the trapper.

At that instant the old trader began to speak in French, which language the trappers both understood. But they saw the Sioux did not comprehend a word of their prisoner's hasty utterance.

"Heavens! To die thus is horrible, for I can tell no one where I secreted Mura, when the Indians began to chase us. She can never move away the great rock which I made fall from above into the opening she crept into. I hoped thus to hide her safely, and I was sure I could escape alone. Alas! my poor horse was shot under me, and now I can never go back to release Mura, or send any one to do so."

Every word of this was heard by Jack Benton and his comrade.

"You hear that, Dan? Mura is shut up in a living grave, from which she cannot escape without help. Her father alone knows the secret. We must learn it. I will learn it and save Mura or lose my scalp!"

Jack whispered this determination in the ear of Dan Cook.

The latter grasped his hand.

"I'm with you to the death on that, Jack," said the brave fellow.

"Thanks, pard. I felt—I knew I could rely on you. But how foolhardy it was for Father Felix to attempt to make the journey from Hawley—where he and his daughter have been on a visit—to Fort Benton alone."

"It must be the news of the Sioux outbreak had not reached the lower settlement when they left it."

"Yes, that must be it."

"We have got to draw the Indians, or at least the most of them, away from the prisoner. You go around the camp. Then open fire from a cover. They will go for you, I take it. Then I'll rush in and make a try to get off with Father Felix."

"Good! I like the plan. I'll meet you on the river near our boat, on this side. In the craft—if we live to reach it—we can cross the stream to our camp."

"Yes."

Dan crept away the next moment, and making a wide detour, he approached the Sioux encampment from the opposite side, as Jack had directed.

Dan Cook looked to his repeating rifle, and assured himself it was all in order for immediate use.

Then, in a state of intense suspense, he waited to hear the report of Dan Cook's unerring rifle.

And he had not long to wait.

Suddenly the sharp, whip-like crack of the trapper's trusty rifle pealed forth above the yells of the exultant savages, who were still dancing about their captive.

With a terrible death-yell one of the painted demons bounded high into the air and then fell heavily to the earth.

The ensuing moment all but two of the Sioux were dashing pell-mell in the direction of Dan Cook's cover.

Jack waited a moment longer.

Then he threw himself flat on the ground and began to move his way through the grass in the direction of the white captive and his guards.

Soon the brave trapper was close beside the two redskins, and they had not as yet detected him.

Suddenly Jack leaped upon the nearest Indian and drove his hunting knife in his breast.

The savage fell dead.

The other leaped at Father Felix, swinging his hatchet to crush the old trader's skull.

But, with the bound of a panther, Jack sprang upon the redskin. His clubbed rifle descended upon his feathered head, and he fell all in a heap.

As Jack hastily cut the cords with which Father Felix was bound, the yells of the Indians whom Dan had led away from the camp rang out.

Jack knew, from the proximity of the sounds, that at least a part of the force which had gone in pursuit of Dan was now returning.

"Quick, Father Felix!" cried Jack, as he assisted the old man to his feet. "We have got to run for our lives now!"

He picked up the loaded rifle, which one of the dead Indians had dropped, and handed it to the old trader.

Then they ran rapidly into the woods.

There was no time to talk, and helping the old man along as best he could in silence, Jack made straight for the river.

He reached the bank with the rescued man.

But the yells of the Indians sounded close in the rear, and in a moment Dan Cook came in sight, under the moonlight, on the bank, with the whole band of Sioux in full cry behind them.

Dan made a spurt, and overtook Jack and Father Felix. The redskins were momentarily distanced. But they presently came close. The Sioux gained upon the fugitives, despite their best efforts.

At last, however, the trappers, with the rescued man, reached their boat.

"Quick! Leap in, Father Felix, while we push the boat off!" cried Jack.

The old man obeyed. In a moment the boat was afloat with all three in it. Jack and Dan seized the oars and pulled away.

In a moment, to their horror, they saw the Indians but a little way down the stream, pulling hidden canoes out from underneath the drooping willows at the water's edge.

With yells of triumph, they sent the little canoes through the water after the whites.

The trappers pulled at the oars like giants.

Father Felix sat in the stern and watched the Indians.

At that moment a shot from the foremost one of the canoes flew over the heads of the men in the boat.

And, almost at the same juncture, the great pine torches, lashed upright in the bow, whose resinous wood had held a smoldering fire all day, burst into flame under the fanning of the stiff breeze, which blew across the river.

There came a crash against the boat as the light flashed upon the water. A great black object was precipitated half way over the side. The boat made a frightful lurch and threatened to capsize.

With a wild scream, Father Felix pitched headlong into the river and disappeared under the dark waters.

"A bear! a bear!" cried Jack, as the dark object slipped off the side of the boat.

Both the trappers saw the largest black bear they had ever seen swimming after the boat as they pushed on, while Father Felix was not seen to rise, and the Indians were so close the trappers did not dare to pause for an instant.

"Lost! Father Felix is lost and with him the secret of Mura's hiding-place!" cried poor Jack, in heart-broken tones.

But presently the great black bear was close astern. Suddenly he made a leap and threw himself half way into the boat, carrying the stern under water.

Jack sprang to his feet, and, swinging his rifle above his head, brought the stock down upon the nose of the fierce animal with tremendous force.

With a howl, bruin let go his hold on the boat and

dropped astern. The trappers shot the boat forward more swiftly than ever then, and they gained the bank a little ahead of the Indians and dashed into the timber.

"If we make for our hidden camp now the Indians will trail us there," said Dan.

"Yes. Let's make a detour, and go down stream. We may yet throw the Indians off, for in a few moments the moon will be out of sight behind Bear Mountain," replied Jack.

Swiftly and silently the two trappers descended the river bank.

Much exhausted, they resolved to go into camp where they were. Undisturbed, they passed the night in a thicket.

When morning dawned they were astir, and they set out for their hidden camp, up stream.

All at once a startled cry emanated from the lips of Jack, as a strange-looking figure emerged from behind a tree. The next moment he recognized the odd-looking personage.

"Father Felix and alive!" shouted Jack, wild with joy.

The old Frenchman was covered from head to foot with mud, and his clothing was in tatters. No wonder the trappers did not know him at first.

"Oh, friends! This meeting is one of joy. I swam under water. I made the shore. Through the briars and brambles I crept, and I lay hidden in the mud until the Indians were far away. And now to save my little Mura," hastily said Father Felix.

"Can you lead us to the hiding-place?" asked Jack.

"I can, of that I am sure; for I marked well in my mind the land-marks about the little cave in the rocks."

"Come on, then!"

Father Felix led the way up stream. The bear hunter found the boat, where it had drifted against a bar, near the shore.

They secured it, all entered, and they crossed the stream. Then Father Felix, still acting as guide, led them to a range of rocky hills.

At a certain point he paused before a great rock, which had evidently recently fallen from above the place where it now lay.

"This is the place! Mura! Mura!" called the old trader.

A sweet, girlish voice sounded from beyond the rock, saying:

"Father, I am here!"

"Mura! We have come to release and save you!" shouted Jack, joyfully.

Then the three men put their shoulders against the great rock and pushed with a will. Neither one of them alone could have moved it, but their united efforts availed.

The stone was removed from the entrance of the cave, and Mura sprang out to be caught in the arms of her father.

But a moment later she was in the fond embrace of the promised husband.

The bear hunters and Father Felix and his daughter made their way in safety to the fort.

That summer there was a wedding there, and Jack and Mura became man and wife.

Of course brave Dan Cook was best man.

GOOD READING

William Harding, of Wireton, Pa., made an unfortunate visit to his hen house when he heard a suspicious noise in his back yard, for while he was standing on a box peering into the shed he slipped and fell through a small window. The seat of his trousers caught on a large nail, and he hung there. Efforts to release himself were unsuccessful. Harding's wife and son, who had been visiting relatives, returned the following morning. Then it was that the unfortunate man was discovered, almost dead from exposure and exhaustion.

Helen Sherman, a waif, who for two years has been in charge of the Wisconsin State Industrial School, now has a real home. Her foster father is Charles Page, a millionaire of Tulsa, Okla., who recently declared his intention of adopting 1,000 children. One day recently Miss Mary J. Berry, superintendent of the industrial school, referred, in Helen's hearing, to the philanthropic work being done by the Oklahoman, remarking that he had adopted in the neighborhood of 300 poor children. "He is my uncle," interpolated the girl, much to the astonishment of her auditors. Subsequent investigation revealed that the girl had told the truth. The uncle was communicated with, and he promptly adopted his niece.

Outrages by brigands throughout Central China have assumed such proportions that the entire Northern army is to be employed by the government in suppressing the disorders, which are rapidly getting beyond control. White Wolf and his bands are ravaging various sections, murdering and robbing the people and burning property. The commander of the troops at Kingtzokwan, Honan Province, recently sacked by brigands, was formerly a noted brigand chief, who gained his army appointment during the revolution. He made no effort to resist the bandits, whose latest exploit was to massacre three hundred townsfolk who resisted their entrance into an important market town near Saingyengfu, Hupeh Province. The greater part of the town was burned.

Recently, while the chief of police was hunting in a wood near Szatmar-Nemeti, Austria, he discovered a cave, and, after proceeding some way in comparative darkness, almost stumbled over a man absolutely covered with hair. There was something so unnatural, so weird and other-world-like about the man that a feeling akin to fear seized the police officer. The man looked for all the world like a beast. Immediately the gendarmes were summoned, and they proceeded to drag the man by force into the daylight. He fought like a tiger, scratching and biting the gendarmes dangerously. At last he was conveyed, amidst a scene of the utmost confusion, to the hospital. Here it was discovered that his name was John Labancz, and that he had lived for twenty-seven years in the cave and fed upon plants. The discovery awakened considerable fear among the superstitious country folk.

Risto Katajisto, a Finnish farmer residing near Winlock, Wash., on coming here for medical treatment for what he supposed was blood-poisoning in his feet, was startled to learn from the examining physician, Dr. Hartman, that he was afflicted with leprosy. According to the local physician, the case is of long standing, the disease being manifested on all parts of the patient's body. The man himself admitted that he had been suffering for five years with the disease, but did not know its nature, and had never consulted a physician. Dr. Hartman enlightened the man as to the nature of his ailment, and told him he could offer no aid, and Katajisto left for his home at Winlock on the evening train. Dr. Hartman at once notified the Washington State Board of Health as to his discovery. Katajisto is fifty-seven years old, and has a wife and a number of children. He lives on a small farm in the vicinity of Winlock.

How many automobiles are there in the world? "A million," one man might answer offhand to this question. "Ten million," could easily be another's guess, and both would be wrong, for the number is known. On January 1 last there were precisely 2,226,849 motor vehicles chug-chugging over the face of the globe. The authority for this is John L. Griffiths, American Consul-General at London, who is in a position to know, having made his estimate from what he calls reliable sources. Here are the figures: United States, 1,435,000; Great Britain and Ireland, 425,838; known total of countries where all motor vehicles are registered, 273,511; estimated total for other countries from sales reports, 92,500. Total world census of automobiles, 2,226,849, of which more than half are in the United States, there being one automobile for every thousand inhabitants, civilized and uncivilized, on the face of the globe, and one for every sixty-nine Americans.

The navy is to have the benefit of the correspondence-school idea in teaching the war game, or Kriegspiel. The war college at Newport is soon to announce the details of a system of instruction for all officers of the service, whether on shore or at sea. The tables on which the Kriegspiel is practiced and a room adapted to the purpose will be provided on every ship, and in the assignment of duties all officers will have time to study the game. Meanwhile, the war college, beginning with this month, will enter a class in January and July every year for a full twelve months' course of instruction in naval strategy. This is a new feature in the instruction at Newport. Every entering class will take up its work alongside a class that has been at work for six months, and in this manner the spirit and traditions of the war college will be handed down. The fact that officers have taken the war-college course and the correspondence course will be entered on their military records.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

VANDALS WRECK COLLECTIONS IN RUSSIAN MUSEUMS.

Nowhere are ancient and valuable art treasures treated with more inconsiderateness and negligence than in Russia. The latest illustration of this comes in a dispatch from Chita, in Transbaikalia, where there is, or rather was, a Buddhist museum highly valued by scientists and historians for its rich collections of objects of lamaistic worship and literature on Tibetan medicine and folklore of the Buriat peoples.

For decades the local authorities seem to have completely neglected this museum. Eventually complaints of its deplorable condition filtered through to St. Petersburg, whence an investigator was dispatched without undue haste. His report is almost incredible in its details of the vandalism to which these fine collections have been subjected. All idols of gold and silver have been carried bodily away; others have been despoiled of their rich silken trappings. The chariot with the image of the Tibetan god Maidar, the pride of the museum, has completely disappeared.

Rare volumes of Tibetan medical lore and others in the Buriat language have been ruthlessly damaged, the leaves having been torn out and scattered about the floor. A complete set of lama processional masks has been apparently hacked about with knives and utterly spoiled. In a word, irreparable damage has been done, and who the culprits are, no one on the spot seems to know or care.

BAGS EIGHT COONS.

When farmer George Smith of Chesterville, Me., went into the woods the other day to cut fuel he got a better load than he had expected. He saw a giant pine "stub" on the edge of an icy marsh, cut it down and began to chop it into four-foot lengths, when he felt his axe strike something soft as it broke through the shell of the stub. Thinking it might be a bear, Smith proceeded cautiously, using wooden wedges to split the stub apart. When the hollow, dry log fell in halves, there, in the cavity lay eight fat coons, snugly housed away for winter. Further up in the trunk were two more coons, while in the stump was a fifty-pounder—the biggest and fattest of the lot. Smith thus got, besides two cords of dry wood, over two hundred pounds of coon meat and eleven skins, and since that day he has given up all other work, and spends his time hunting for more hollow pine "stubs" containing coons. The best time to find these snug harbors for coons is just after a damp snowstorm, when melted spots on the snow-covered trunks betray the presence of the animals, whose warmth thaws the snow. Jack Hogan, a woodsman at Lowelltown, the other day felled a tree, which in coming down struck another tree—an old pine of great size, uprooting it. Under the roots of the pine lay a big black bear. The bear was furious at being thus rudely disturbed in his winter sleep, and made a savage attack upon Hogan, but the woodsman's sharp axe was

quickly buried in bruin's brain. That job netted Hogan \$25, for the bear was a 400-pounder, with a good thick coat for this time of year. Hogan is now looking for more sleeping bears.

GERMANY PLANNING STRONG BOUNDARY.

The General Staff has completed the plans for strengthening the military position of the eastern boundary of the empire. It is true that there are no present signs of war between Russia and Germany, but there is always the possibility that rivalry in the Near East will bring the two countries into collision. Again, Russia is the ally of France, and if the ever present menace of war between France and Germany should develop into a fact, Russia would not dare to risk the destruction of European equilibrium by allowing her ally to be defeated without making at least a show of offensive efforts against Germany.

It is these conditions that have led the General Staff to make its plans for the fortification of the eastern frontier. On the west Germany is measurably protected by the Rhine and the Alps, but on the east the broad and usually smooth Vistula, flowing northward from Poland, cuts off the whole province of East Prussia, and Poland juts in between Germany and Austria like a wedge. To counteract the natural disadvantages of the situation it has been decided to strengthen the line of the river by fortified bridge heads, so as to deny passage to the enemy, and to retain for Germany the greatest liberty of maneuvers.

The Vistula is spanned by bridges at Thorn, Fordon, Graudenz, Dirschau, Marienburg and Marienwerder. Work has already been begun on fortresses to protect these bridges, and it is expected that they will be ready in another three years. In the meantime a partial reorganization of the German army is going forward to provide for the protection of the eastern frontier.

Under the new law the army will number more than 900,000 on a peace footing. It is organized in twenty-five army corps, of which the 1st (East Prussian), 2d (Pomeranian), 17th (West Prussian) and the new 20th Corps are united in one inspection district, with headquarters at Danzig, and will probably be named the Army of the Vistula. In case of war these troops will be duplicated by reserve divisions and with the fortified bridge heads, enabling them to attack or fall back on the defensive at pleasure, will constitute a formidable barrier to any Russian attack seeking to cross the sandy and wooded plains which stretch from Berlin to the Polish border.

It is considered by the General Staff that this army, pivoting on the fortresses, would be able to hold the Russians in check, at least, until events developed in the west, and perhaps until a series of decisive battles had been won. But, in addition to the Army of the Vistula, it is probable that another army will be organized, based on Dresden or Breslau, and detailed to guard the Fatherland while the main force assembles west of the Rhine.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch.

It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

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GOOD LUCK BANKS.

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickelized brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

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CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.

The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it

comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE SWIMMING FISH

Here is a fine mechanical toy. It is an imitation goldfish, about 4½ inches long, and contains a water-tight compartment which will not allow it to sink. To keep it in a natural position, the lower fin is ballasted with lead. To make it work, a spring is wound up. You then throw it in the water, and the machinery inside causes the tail to wiggle, and propel it in the most lifelike manner. When it runs down the fish floats until it is recovered, and it can then be rewound. Races between two of these fishes are very interesting. Price, 25 cents each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

LAUGHABLE EGG TRICK

This is the funniest trick ever exhibited and always produces roars of laughter. The performer says to the audience that he requires some eggs for one of his experiments. As no spectator carries any, he calls his assistant, taps him on top of the head, he gags, and an egg comes out of his mouth. This is repeated until six eggs are produced. It is an easy trick to perform, once you know how, and always makes a hit. Directions given for working it. Price, 25 cents by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

X-RAY WONDER

This is a wonderful little optical illusion. In use, you apparently see the bones in your hand, the hole in a pipe-stem, the lead in a pencil, etc. The principle on which it is operated cannot be disclosed here, but it will afford no end of fun for any person who has one. Price, 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.

This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

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LITTLE CLINCHERS

With a pair of these creepers clinched on your shoes you can defy the slipperiest ice or snow. No matter how slippery the road or how steep the hill, these claws of steel will carry you safely over them. A child can adjust them in 30 seconds. No nails, straps, screws or rivets are needed. They will not injure your shoes. No need to remove them indoors—simply fold the heel-plate forward, reversing the spikes under the instep. They are comfortable, durable and invisible. Just the thing for postmen, golfers, hunters, woodsmen, brakemen, miners and all who would insure life and limb in winter weather. 25 cents a pair, postpaid.

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This is one of the greatest musical instruments ever invented. It is made entirely of metal and is almost invisible when in use. With it, in a few moments, you can learn to play all kinds of tunes, have lots of fun, please and amuse your friends and make some money, too. Fine for either song or piano accompaniment or by itself alone. You place the whistlephone in the mouth with half circle out, place end of tongue to rounded part and blow gently as if to cool the lips. A few trials will enable one to play any tune or air.

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Will fly on a horizontal line 150 feet! Can be flown in the house, and will not injure itself nor anything in the room. The most perfect little aeroplane made. The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance sideways before it is released for flight. Price, 35c. each, delivered.

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SLIDE THE PENCIL.

The pencil that keeps them guessing. Made of wood and lead just like an ordinary pencil, but when your victim starts to write with it—presto! the lead disappears. It is so constructed that the slightest pressure on the paper makes the lead slide into the wood. Very funny and a practical joke.

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PIGGY IN A COFFIN.

This is a wicked pig that died at an early age, and here he is in his coffin ready for burial. There will be a great many mourners at his funeral, for this coffin, pretty as it looks, is very tricky, and the man who gets it open will feel real grief. The coffin is made of metal, perfectly shaped and beautifully lacquered. The trick is to open it to see the pig. The man that tries it gets his fingers and feelings hurt, and piggy comes out to grunt at his victims. The tubular end of the coffin, which everyone (in trying to open) presses inward, contains a needle which stabs the victim in his thumb or finger every time. This is the latest and a very "impressive" trick. It can be opened easily by anyone in the secret, and as a neat catch-joke to save yourself from a bore is unsurpassed. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

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A clever and puzzling effect, easy to do; the apparatus can be minutely examined. Effect: A marble can be made to pass from the hand into the closed vase, which a moment before was shown empty. This is a beautiful enameled turned wood vase.

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A lady's fan made of colored silk cloth. The fan may be used and then shut, and when it opens again, it falls in pieces; shut and open again and it is perfect, without a sign of a break. A great surprise for those not in the trick. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

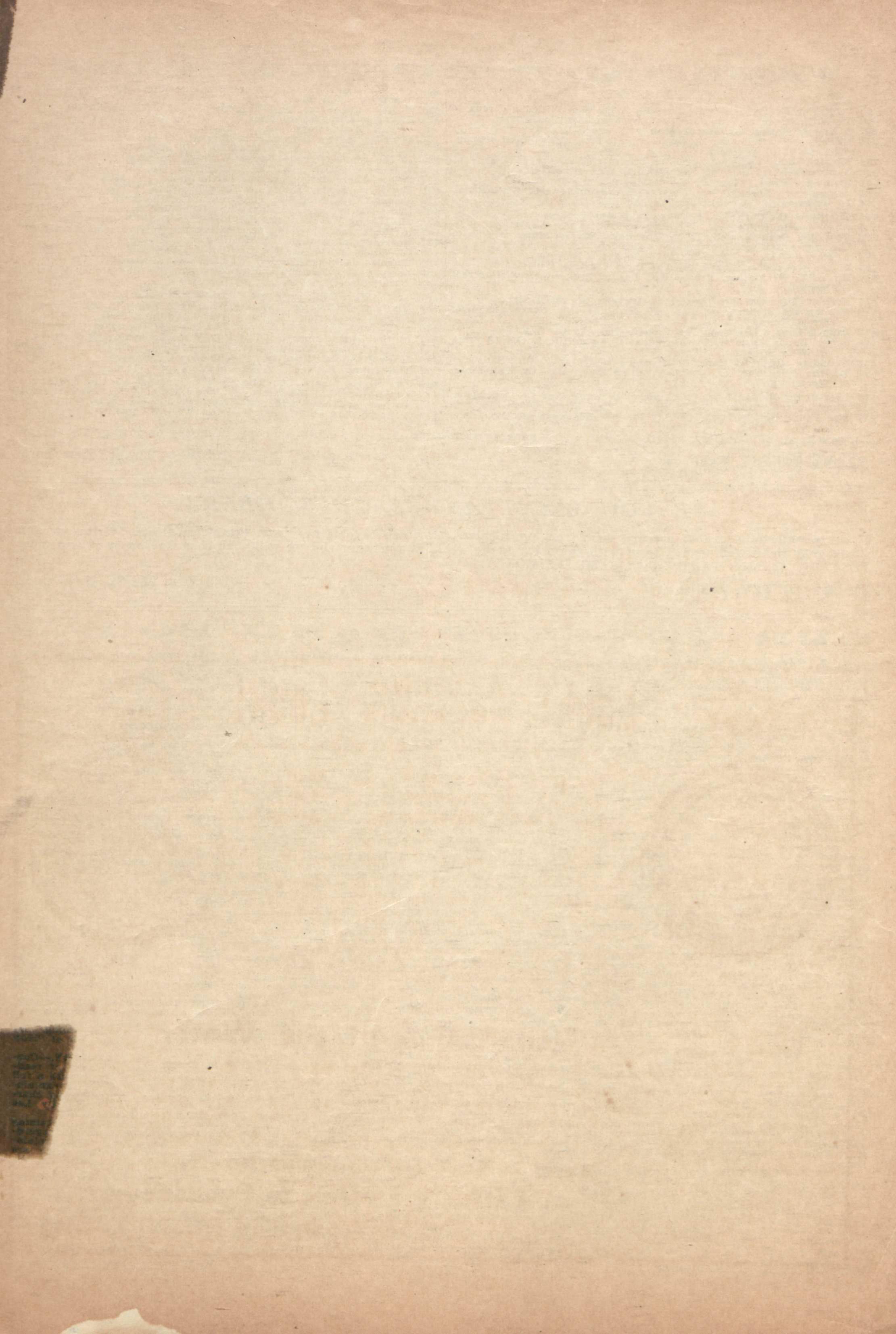
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